THE RACKET

BY

BARTLETT CORMACK

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UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

THE RACKET

A PLAY

BY

BARTLETT CORMACK

"Bloody instructions, which being taught, return
To plague the inventor . . . ."

MACBETH

SAMUEL FRENCH

Incorporated 1898

THOS. R. EDWARDS, Managing Director

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PREFACE

The game of identifying certain characters of the following play with living persons whose individuality in action and effect has made them well-known in Chicago, where the play is laid, and by grace of the press familiar to the outside world, has been pursued with such gossipy enthusiasm since the production of the play in New York that it perhaps behooves me to state that the names, the characters themselves, and the story of "The Racket" are imaginary. That anything can be imaginary in a creative sense is difficult for most people, unacquainted with imagination as they are, to understand. But that a play in which existing street names and telephone numbers, allusions to facts of general knowledge (such as that stock-yards are apt to smell), and characters, rather than tintypes, are used to assist in creating a savor of truth can be imaginative, they find it downright impossible to believe. The thing is real (what they mean is that the impression of the thing is real); therefore, it must be true (by which they mean that the people and situations of the play must have been whisked bodily from the author's experience to the stage.) Playwrights—the young ones, mostly, who are trying to become dramatists by working, with a sustained intensity of concentration that would give the so-tired Businessman paresis if he were capable even of attempting the experiment, and by taking their work and

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not themselves quite seriously—are feeding their imaginations on behavior instead of on the old and suddenly recognizable shabby fairy tales nowadays. Accordingly, character in action on their stage is, to put it simply, bad, as well as good; and the implication of their plays is that while America is, certainly, exciting, there are indications that it is not the best of all possible worlds: the traffic that makes one miss his engagement with a most beautiful, charming girl, for example (love-interest is essential in a playwright). Indeed, there are times when they twitch and feel with Stephen Crane, "if I am going to be drowned, why in the name of the seven mad gods who rule the sea was I allowed to come thus far and contemplate sand and trees?" A laugh is always more appreciative, and aperient, than a curse. Still, there are those times, when the spectacle is too preposterously human to be borne. And then the playwright . . . talks, volubly, with gestures, about writing a play. Sometimes he writes it. But he has written because his imagination was flushed by the discovery that human beings behave humanly, remember, and so certain of the characters and situations he used to dramatize such an extraordinary state of affairs are regarded as not "desirable" by the minnow-like people to whom life (playwrights are forever blethering about "life"!) means swimming anonymously, tidily, downstream, and taking care not to antagonize even another minnow because it is not nice to antagonize anyone, and anyway the other minnow just might be, or become, a whale. The "truth" of the play (the knowledge x the imaginative power x the technical skill of the playwright) having "convinced" (mesmerized) this shoal

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that the thing was copied "from life," they whisper, chatter, and finally scribble their silly do-gangsters-really-kill-policemen-right-in-police-stations-in-Chicago-in-this-day-and-age, with Mr. Coolidge President and everything? and So-and-so-in-that-play-is-supposed-to-be-So-and-so. The So-and-sos thus identified with the "undesirable" persons and happenings in the play naturally protest. The author is thrilled with satisfaction at having worked so well that his characters and story, dictated though they were by what Mr. Somerset Maugham in a foreword like this has patiently explained are "the exigencies of the intrigue," are believed, of course. But he is, also, annoyed, and when the protestors are mighty in authority and means, as those who have been so falsely identified with "The Racket" are, he is annoyed in no uncertain terms. For the sake of his character as, if I may say so, a creative artist, and for the sake of the actual persons he is reported to have skinned alive and penned, hurt, and embarrassed in their nakedness, against his scene, the playwright consequently denies that he is a combination photographer, stenographer, phonograph, and dictaphone, and asks to be regarded instead as a playwright, to whom unrelated facts, people, and experiences are the raw material from which he distils, as perfectly and significantly as he is able, a play.

BARTLETT CORMACK

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CHARACTERS

PRATT, *of the Tribune*
MILLER, *of the Herald-Examiner*
SERGEANT SULLIVAN
A PATROLMAN
LIEUTENANT GILL
ASSISTANT STATE'S ATTORNEY WELCH
TURCK
DETECTIVE SERGEANT DELANEY
PATROLMAN JOHNSON
CAPTAIN MCQUIGG
DAVE AMES, *of the City Press*
JOE
IRENE HAYES
SERGEANT SCHMIDT
CLARK
SAM MEYER, *of Reilly, Platka and Cohn*
ALDERMAN KUBLACEK
AN UNIDENTIFIED MAN
ANOTHER PATROLMAN
GLICK

SCENE

An Outlying Police Station, Chicago, in Early November

ACT I. The Central Room, Friday, Midnight.
ACT II. The Same, late the next—Saturday—Afternoon.
ACT III. The Captain's Office, a few minutes later.

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THE RACKET *was produced by Alexander McKaig at the Ambassador Theatre, New York, November 22, 1927, with the following cast:*

PRATT, *of the Tribune*	*Willard Robertson*
MILLER, *of the Herald-Examiner*	*Hugh O'Connell*
SERGEANT SULLIVAN	*Mal Kelly*
A PATROLMAN	*Charles O'Connor*
LIEUTENANT GILL	*Harry English*
ASSISTANT STATE'S ATTORNEY WELCH	*Romaine Callender*
TURCK	*Harry McCoy*
DETECTIVE SERGEANT DELANEY	*Fred Irving Lewis*
PATROLMAN JOHNSON	*G. Pat Collins*
CAPTAIN MCQUIGG	*John Cromwell*
DAVE AMES, *of the City Press*	*Norman Foster*
JOE	*Edward Eliscu*
IRENE HAYES	*Marion Coakley*
SERGEANT SCHMIDT	*C. E. Smith*
CLARK	*Jack Clifford*
SAM MEYER, *of Reilly, Platka and Cohn*	*Ralph Adams*
ALDERMAN KUBLACEK	*Louis Frohoff*
AN UNIDENTIFIED MAN	*Edward G. Robinson*
ANOTHER PATROLMAN	*Mike Flanagan*
GLICK	*Robert Le Seuer*

The Settings were by Livingston Platt

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ACT ONE

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ACT ONE

SCENE—*The central room of the Tenth District police station far out on the South-West side of Chicago.*

The station is an old, remodeled Victorian house, and so this room is large, with a high ceiling, smoky old wainscoting, and soiled kalsomined walls in one of which there is a streak of fresh plaster that has lately repaired a crack. Two high, arched windows without blinds, their panes grimy and streaked with rain, are back left * *and right of a double door that leads out through a storm entry-way down a short flight of steps to the street. The door to the Captain's office is halfway down left; another, to the Lieutenant's office, is up right; and a swing door leads to the interior of the station down right. An old telephone booth encloses a toll 'phone in the corner back left. A small blackboard on which orders are posted and chalked is on the wall between the booth and the Captain's door. There is a radiator under the blackboard, and a water-cooler and glass back by the door to the street.*

A breast-high partition of the same wood as the wainscoting and doors juts from the right wall, forming an enclosure that is the desk Sergeant's "office." Swing gates enter it up and down. Inside are a desk and chair, and on the desk the usual station arrest and complaint

* The stage directions throughout are right and left from the audience's, not actor's, point-of-view.

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books, three desk telephones—one rings, the others jingle—and a teletype machine that now and then whirs and writes off reports from headquarters downtown. There is an old bench against the wall this side of the Captain's door, and over it a NO SMOKING placard in red block letters signed by the City Fire Commissioner. An old-fashioned brass and glass chandelier hangs from the center of the ceiling, and an electric light in a green glass shade over the desk. Down left are an old kitchen table and two chairs, and nearby an iron spittoon, politically large, its inner surface of white enamel mostly scarred away.

It is shortly before midnight of a Friday in early November.

The lights are lit. PRATT *and* MILLER, *reporters, are at the table, playing rummy.* MILLER *is thirty-two, robust, unkempt, and now, as usual, slightly drunk. He is wearing the old topcoat he never is without, and in its pocket a copy of the American Mercury. A pint bottle of whiskey, a third full, is at his elbow.* PRATT *is twenty-nine, and debonair. His overcoat is folded on the bench, and his hat is at the correctly cocky angle on his head. They are cynical fellows—*PRATT *lightly, amusedly;* MILLER *heavily, bored.* PRATT *is softly humming, whistling, and dum de-da-da-ing a snatch of tune from a popular song as he plays.* SERGEANT SULLIVAN, *a fat, white-haired old-timer in uniform, is busy at the desk.*

MILLER *takes a card from the pack, grimaces wearily at it, and discards it.*

PRATT. [*Taking* MILLER'S *discard, discarding, and slapping down his hand.*] Out. Pay me—double. [*Going to*

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the desk, he takes a 'phone and jiggles the receiver hook.]

MILLER. [*Staring at his beaten hand.*] Horses! [*He throws down his cards, rises, and shoves a hand down in a pocket to push down his constricting pants.*] I told you—I'd rather play bridge, with the cops.

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] Wire, darling.

MILLER. [*Irascibly.*] Where is this Captain?

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] Superior oh one hundred.

MILLER. God, I'm tired. Up all day. I'm goin' to get out o' this comical business.

SULLIVAN. I never saw a reporter that wasn't, an' I never saw one that did.

[*The teletype whirs and writes.*]

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] Give me the desk. [SULLIVAN *tears off the teletyped sheet.*] Anything doing, Sarge?

SULLIVAN. No. A stick-up.

MILLER. In this God-forsaken zone o' quiet?

SULLIVAN. No.

PRATT. [*Amusedly.*] Who'd stick-up what, out here?

MILLER. Listen, Baby—trade follows the flag. With this McQuigg captain here now, anythin's liable to happen.

SULLIVAN. We can stand it. I ain't used to nothin' ever happenin' anymore'n you.

MILLER. No kid?

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SULLIVAN. In the old days they was some use for policemen. Now pipe me—wet-nurse to a whole Ward, an' gettin' a belly on me, 'cause *police*men 're out o' style.

MILLER. You got a policeman in your new Captain. There's plenty o' sand in his spinach.

PRATT. Don't let him get your hopes raised, Sarge. He's worked on that sheet of his so long his imagination runs in purple headlines across a yellow sky.

MILLER. I suppose somethin's not liable to break here with McQuigg and Nick Scarsi itchin' to have each other's eyes for grapes?

SULLIVAN. I heard somethin' about the Captain an' that mug.

PRATT. [*To* MILLER.] You don't expect to see any Scarsis out here, do you? A cow would moo and scare those gangsters to death.

MILLER. McQuigg's here, ain't he? [*He flops to a chair, hoisting his feet to the other one.*]

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] Bob? . . . Pratt, on that McQuigg interview.

MILLER. Where the hell *is* McQuigg?

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] Sure. But all he does is quote his transfer order—you know: that for-the-good-of-the-department stuff.

MILLER. "For the good o'—" Nuts.

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] Damn right he's mad.

MILLER. He's bloodshot.

SULLIVAN. Who? The Captain?

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MILLER. Don't kid me.

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] All right. I'll call you back. [*Replacing the 'phone.*] No, Sarge—mustn't kid him. He knows! [*He goes to the table.*]

MILLER. Who don't know why McQuigg got dropped out here?

[PRATT *jerks the chair from under* MILLER'S *feet.*]

Jes', [*Rising.*] you would! [*He goes to and takes the 'phone.*]

SULLIVAN. [*To* PRATT.] It was Scarsi got the Captain transferred, uh?

PRATT. Sh-h. Mustn't gossip, Sergeant! [*He deals and plays solitaire.*]

SULLIVAN. That Scarsi! [*He grunts.*] Why somebody don't *get* him—

PRATT. Nobody gets a chance.

MILLER. He's got a horse-shoe. After he banged his last competitor the corpse's whole family got in a frenzy at Nick's gyppin' 'em out o' their gold-mine—you know, there's a *seventy* per cent profit in liquor up North there in McQuigg's old District, where the high class people live. They took a shot at Nick every time he went to mass. Not a scratch.

[*At the 'phone.*] Greetin's, Genevieve. How was that nap? . . . You win. Main five thousand.

[A PATROLMAN *comes from the Captain's office in shirtsleeves and suspenders, carrying a mop and a scrub-pail, and goes out right.*]

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PRATT. Didn't the Captain say when he'd be back?

SULLIVAN. No.

MILLER. [*At the 'phone.*] Give me the desk.

PRATT. He's sleeping here till he gets moved, isn't he?

SULLIVAN. Yeh.

PRATT. How he must love that.

MILLER. [*At the 'phone.*] Boss, this is Miller again, out to hellangone on that McQuigg interview. . . . No, he won't talk. . . . But the City Press'll be here. They'll get it if he does. . . . Yeh-h-h, the Tribune's here. . . . All *ri*— Say! . . . They made some more o' those pre-election raids here tonight—those cathouses out South. . . . Wait a second. [*To* SULLIVAN.] How many from those raids you got downstairs?

SULLIVAN. Seven.

MILLER. [*At the phone.*] Seven. . . . No, just bewildered little tarts. . . . No, for pictures you can get better ones at the stations downtown . . . 'right. [*Replacing the 'phone.*] If that office o' mine calls me again, tell 'em I'm gone. They're not goin' to have me runnin' down tips on that Higgins' story again tonight.

SULLIVAN. Did you find anythin'?

MILLER. On what?

SULLIVAN. Didn't you say Higgins—that private sec-'etary o' the Old Man who disappeared?

PRATT. "Disappeared." Ha!

SULLIVAN. They've even had us lookin' for him.

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MILLER. You all better quit lookin', or somebody just might find somethin' of him, and that'd reach high up.

PRATT. And that *would* blow to hell the Grand Old Party's chances of staying in after this election Tuesday.

SULLIVAN. I heard them rumors about what happened to Higgins.

PRATT. [*Smiling.*] You don't believe rumors, do you, Sarge?

SULLIVAN. About politicians, I'd believe anythin'.

[MILLER *opens the door to the street and peers out.*]

PRATT. Aren't you going to stick?

MILLER. [*Slamming the door to.*] Have to, till the Press comes. That half-wit we got on the desk can't think fast enough to say anythin' but "Stick around awhile." [*He gets out his cigarette package, discovers it to be empty, crumples it, and throws it to the floor as* LIEUTENANT GILL *comes from his office—a stocky, stolid, unimaginative man of forty-eight, with a short black mustache, and a manner that he conceives to be professionally hard. He is in uniform.*] Give me a cigarette.

[PRATT *gives* MILLER *his cigarettes.*]

GILL. [*Picking up the cigarette package.*] Here! [*He tosses it to* MILLER.] There's a waste-paper place out back.

PRATT. [*At* MILLER.] Certainly. T't-t-t! [*To* GILL.]

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Lieutenant, I've been wanting to tell you what a relief it is to be in a clean station nowadays.

GILL. This District's as clean outside as the station is in. That's why we're not in your papers all the time. [*He starts out down right.*]

MILLER. Why don't you extend the good work to take in that cell those women are in downstairs? God!

GILL. We haven't facilities for women here.

PRATT. Do you know when the Captain will be—?

GILL. He just 'phoned he's on his way. [*He goes out.*]

MILLER. McQuigg'll unwind his red-tape. [*He drinks the rest of the whiskey with a shudder and a wrenching clearing of his throat.*]

PRATT. You'd better cut that stuff.

MILLER. It's cut plenty before I get it. [*He goes to the water-cooler and gets a drink.*]

PRATT. [*To* SULLIVAN.] What time's the City Press get here?

SULLIVAN. He 'phoned he'd be late. He had to cover a campaign meetin' up at the other end o' the Ward.

[ASSISTANT STATE'S ATTORNEY WELCH *comes in from the street, followed by* TURCK. WELCH *is forty-two, pale, and tight.* TURCK *is large, hard, impassive. He is lazily chewing gum.*]

MILLER. Hi.

WELCH. [*Going to the desk.*] How are you, Boys?

PRATT. What's the hanging prosecutor doing out here?

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WELCH. The Old Man spoke at a meeting of ours out here tonight.

PRATT. [*Smiling.*] But that was at the other end of the Ward, wasn't it, Mr. Welch?

WELCH. [*To* SULLIVAN.] The Captain in?

SULLIVAN. What can I do for you?

WELCH. I'm Assistant State's Attorney Welch.

PRATT. You know, Sarge—the Old Man's nominee for County Judge Tuesday, on the—ah—Gluttonous Republicans' ticket.

WELCH. What?

PRATT. Oh, just my way of telling you two Republican factions apart. It does seem rather gluttonous not to give the Reform gang at least a couple of bones to gnaw. Their tongues are hanging out after the famine they've been through.

WELCH. You're the Tribune, aren't you? [PRATT *bows.*] I thought I recognized the air. Fresh. [*He turns back to* SULLIVAN.]

PRATT. The difference *is* striking, after you've been used to the other kind.

WELCH. [*To* SULLIVAN.] This is Sergeant Turck, of my office. He'll be here for these raids.

SULLIVAN. [*To* TURCK.] Out back.

[TURCK *goes out right.*]

WELCH. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Do you know where the Captain went?

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SULLIVAN. No, sir.

PRATT. Wasn't he at that revival of yours?

MILLER. [*After an exasperated look at* PRATT.] How's it look for Tuesday, Welch?

WELCH. It's a cinch.

PRATT. [*Smiling.*] Who for?

WELCH. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Tell the Captain I was in.

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir.

[WELCH *goes out to the street.*]

MILLER. [*To* PRATT.] Askin' him if McQuigg wasn't at that meetin' o' theirs! To kiss the hand that slapped him, I suppose.

PRATT. Oh, Welch is nothing but a frightened little Yes-man, anyway.

MILLER. Who ain't?

[DETECTIVE SERGEANT DELANEY *comes in from the street—a smooth-faced, athletic, good-looking man of thirty-seven, in plain-clothes, a topcoat, and soft hat. He goes alertly to* SULLIVAN.]

DELANEY. [*To* SULLIVAN.] The Captain in?

SULLIVAN. He's on his way.

PRATT. *Hel*lo, Delaney!

DELANEY. [*Abstractedly.*] Hi, Scribe. [*Back to* SULLIVAN.] Any alarms?

SULLIVAN. No-o-o.

DELANEY. There may be. There's a mob o' strangers to

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this peaceful little community out here tonight, so you better tell the men out back to ditch their cards and get the lead out o' their pants. [*To* PRATT.] We all have to be on our toes now, with McQuigg.

PRATT. [*Shaking hands.*] How long have they had you here?

DELANEY. [*Drily.*] Since the last election.

MILLER. Jes', you can't collect out here, can you?

DELANEY. No, this District drinks milk.

[*One of the desk 'phones jingles.*]

SULLIVAN. [*Answering.*] Tenth District—Sullivan.

PRATT. Play some rummy, Sarge?

DELANEY. Shoot 'em. [*He goes to the table and they play.*]

SULLIVAN. [*At the 'phone.*] Yes, lady.

MILLER. Where is—that—City—Press? [*He drops to the bench, and dozes.*]

SULLIVAN. [*At the 'phone.*] Yes'm. I'll have an officer right over.

[DELANEY *twists around to him.* SULLIVAN *replaces the 'phone and goes to the door down right.*]

DELANEY. What is it?

SULLIVAN. [*Pushing open the door.*] Johnson!

JOHNSON. [*Off.*] Yes, sir.

DELANEY. Sullivan! What is it?

SULLIVAN. [*Returning to the desk.*] Nothin'. Some kids

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in an automobile disturbin' a lady's peace. [DELANEY *turns back to the game.* PATROLMAN JOHNSON *comes in down right—a tall, blond, powerful young man, buttoning his uniform coat.*] Drop over to eight nine one six Catalpa. Householder there can't sleep on account of a pettin' party parked out front. Prob'ly some o' them kids from the University, drunk an' raisin' hell.

MILLER. If they're collegiate, they're prob'ly raisin' a family.

[JOHNSON *starts for the street.*]

SULLIVAN. Just give 'em a spankin' and send 'em home.

JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

DELANEY. And keep your eyes open.

JOHNSON. [*Cockily.*] Me? Why?

DELANEY. There's a new crowd moved out here tonight. You might bump into somethin'.

JOHNSON. [*Grinning.*] Anythin' that bumps me ain't goin' to get up first. [*He goes out.*]

DELANEY. Look out they don't bump you from behind!

[*One of the desk 'phones rings.*]

SULLIVAN. [*Answering.*] Tenth District—Sullivan. . . . Yeh, right here. [*To* MILLER.] You, Miller.

MILLER. [*Rousing.*] Huh?

SULLIVAN. [*Setting the 'phone atop the partition.*] Your office wants you.

MILLER. [*Rising.*] I told you I left, didn't I? [*He goes to the 'phone.*]

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SULLIVAN. You haven't, have y'?

DELANEY. [*As* PRATT *takes his discard.*] You would save aces.

MLLER. [*At the 'phone.*] Yeh? . . . Yeh-h. . . . Yeh-h-h. . . . All right. [*He hangs up viciously, and makes a note on copy paper pulled from his overcoat pocket.*] Up at eight this mornin', up all night, and have to be in the Speeders' Court at ten t'morrow to fix another one. [*Stuffing the copy paper away.*] The wife of a friend o' somebody who's a friend o' God, the city editor, just got a ticket for tryin' to beat a moonbeam across Michigan Avenue bridge. If a few more friends o' friends o' people who know somebody who works on a newspaper get on to this racket, somebody in that court's liable to retire a millionaire. [*He sags to the bench again.*] I hope the crime wave's quiet tomorrow, anyway.

PRATT. It will be, till after election, anyway. [*To* DELANEY.] Eh, Sarge? [*To* MILLER.] Haven't you noticed, Bright Boy—being on the inside of everything as you are—how quiet crime's been for the last few weeks, how hushed, so that the people may be lulled into a little additional stupor, and on Tuesday sleep-walk to the polls in such a glow of sweet security and peace that they'll vote to retain the—uh—heroic administration that put down crime, till after election?

MILLER. [*With a tired wave of an arm.*] H'ray! [PRATT *begins to whistle his tune again.* MILLER *jumps up.*] 'Ve you got to memorize that dirge? [*He gets out his bottle, discovers it to be empty, and throws it on the table.*]

DELANEY. [*Tossing him the bottle.*] Here.

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MILLER. [*Catching it.*] It's empty.

DELANEY. That's why it don't belong in here. The visitin' public might take it as evidence o' that rumor that policemen drink. [MILLER *goes into the entry-way, throws the bottle out and returns.*]

DELANEY. [*Slapping down his hand.*] There you are.

PRATT. You caught me with a fist-full that time.

[*The door from the street is flung open and* CAPTAIN MCQUIGG *comes in in uniform—a man of burly virility, smooth-shaven, ruddy, with close-cropped iron-grey hair and steady eyes. He is fifty-three. He has the bottle* MILLER *threw away.*]

PRATT. [*Rising, and tossing* DELANEY *some change.*] Here. [DELANEY *rises.*]

MILLER. Hi, Captain.

MCQUIGG. [*Extending the bottle.*] That's a fine thing to come sailin' out of a police station in this God-Almighty respectable Ward? Whose is it?

MILLER. You can have it, Captain.

MCQUIGG. I thought it'd be you boys. [*Going to the desk.*] No policeman'd drink that class o' goods. [*Setting the bottle on the partition.*] Get rid of it, Sergeant.

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. [*He takes the bottle and starts out right.*]

MCQUIGG. Delaney, see if the Lieutenant's got those raid orders.

DELANEY. Yes, sir. I want to see you, Captain. [*He goes into* GILL'S *office.*]

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PRATT. Captain, about that interview—

MCQUIGG. Oh, uh—Sergeant! [SULLIVAN *turns.*] On your way back, stop at your locker and bring the boys a shot o' whiskey that can stand up for itself. They deserve it, havin' to spend the night so far away from home.

SULLIVAN. I've no whiskey, sir!

MCQUIGG. Go along, Sergeant, or you'll have me believin' this station's the old man's home they say it is.

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. [*He goes out.*]

PRATT. Captain—

MCQUIGG. No story.

PRATT. There is for my paper, if you'll talk.

MILLER. Yeh. "Something must be done."

MCQUIGG. Start another anti-smoke campaign. [*He starts for his office.* GILL *comes in down right, characteristically distressed.*]

GILL. [*To* MCQUIGG.] This— [SULLIVAN *comes hesitantly in with a whiskey-glass of whiskey in each hand.*] This havin' liquor in the station's news to me. I've never stood for it.

MCQUIGG. Maybe that's what's the matter with this station. [*He motions* SULLIVAN *to the table.*] All right, Boys. Get warm.

SULLIVAN. There was a smidgeon, sir, we took off some joy-ridin' kids one night, so's they'd be able to drive home.

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MCQUIGG. Thank you, Sergeant. Did you take those glasses off somebody, too?

SULLIVAN. No, sir. There's nothin' in the Constitution about them. [*He returns to the desk.*]

MILLER. Here's to birth control! [*He and* PRATT *drink.*]

MCQUIGG. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Anythin' new?

SULLIVAN. An Assistant State's Attorney in.

PRATT. Welch.

MCQUIGG. [*Half to himself.*] What's *he* want?

GILL. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Bring in the books.

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. [GILL *goes into his office,* SULLIVAN *following him with some station books.*]

PRATT. Captain, about your transfer?

MCQUIGG. What're you up to? Policemen've been transferred before.

MILLER. You haven't.

MCQUIGG. [*Starting for his office.*] The hell I haven't.

PRATT. Not since you've been a Captain. We'd like a—

MCQUIGG. [*Turning.*] I know what you'd like, knowin' the papers. You'd like me to let out a bray that'd make an election issue for you and a jackass out o' me.

MILLER. Oh, no, Captain, we wouldn't want you to—

PRATT. *We* would. Where did your transfer order come from?

MCQUIGG. From the Chief's office, didn't it?

PRATT. Through the Chief's office. It had to, to be

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signed. But who—? [MCQUIGG *turns for his office.*] Captain, we've got this story now! But we have to have somebody to quote.

MCQUIGG. Have all the cemeteries run out o' names? [*He unlocks his office door.*]

PRATT. Captain, suppose one of our leading gangsters—?

MCQUIGG. [*Sharply.*] Who?

PRATT. [*Smiling.*] Well, perhaps I should say one of our leading big-business men—a nice, new model big-business man with all the latest Republican improvements and accessories—a punk with about nine murders and no convictions against him—with a liquor and blackmail and graft racket that's a gold mine, and a lot of protection for helping the boys out at elections—a cocky, all wrapped-up-in-cotton-batting big-business man—like Nick Scarsi, say—?

MCQUIGG. What about him?

PRATT. Suppose the policeman in command of the District that Scarsi's richest liquor territory was in had been fighting his lordship over who'd run that District, Mr. Scarsi, or the police?

MCQUIGG. [*His eyes pinching.*] Well?

PRATT. And then one of Scarsi's important men got in a jam on a charge that wasn't bailable, like rape? And that in view of this approaching election, the powers-that-be thought the charge ought to be changed to contributing to the delinquency of a minor, because that charge is bailable, and probational, and in every

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way a much nicer charge than rape? But that the policeman who'd caught Scarsi's man, and knew he could make the rape charge stick, got his back up, and swore he'd send him down if it was the last thing—

MCQUIGG. That's strong, for a policeman, these days.

PRATT. Suppose he was a Captain, and that he worked so fast he yanked Nick's man up before a reform judge and *did* send him down? And then he got exiled to the sticks. Wouldn't that be a story?

MCQUIGG. For the movies. [*He goes into his office and slams the door.*]

MILLER. Flop.

PRATT. He's got something in the back of his head.

MILLER. You knew he wouldn't talk. You think he's crazy? They can't transfer him any farther away. But, no, you make speeches till I'll never get home tonight. [*He starts for the door right.*]

PRATT. Where are you going?

MILLER. Sullivan's locker. [*He goes out.*]

[MCQUIGG *comes from his office with some reports and goes to the desk.*]

PRATT. [*Following* MILLER.] Wait for baby. [*He goes out.*]

MCQUIGG. Delaney!

DELANEY. [*From* GILL'S *office.*] Yes, sir. [*He comes in.*]

MCQUIGG. Want to see me? [*He goes over the reports.*]

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DELANEY. I made some trucks comin' out o' that old brewery a mile west o' here tonight, and nosed around the works. They're runnin' full blast on near-beer permits, with a detail o' those mugs from the Prohibition Department to give it a legal air.

MCQUIGG. Anythin' else?

DELANEY. Who do you think's in charge? Himself.

MCQUIGG. [*Turning sharply.*] Don't tell me—Nick?

DELANEY. Personally. [GILL *comes in, followed by* SULLIVAN, *who returns to the desk.*]

MCQUIGG. Was that all you saw?

DELANEY. That was enough for me.

MCQUIGG. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Any squads out?

SULLIVAN. Schmidt's. They'll be in at midnight, and then we're clear.

MCQUIGG. [*To* GILL.] General order for all shifts—watch that brewery.

GILL. [*Staring.*] At Ninety-first and Western there?

MCQUIGG. I'm glad you know where it is, anyway.

GILL. Why, that brewery's been abandoned! The Federal authorities padlocked it.

MCQUIGG. Well, Mr. Nick Scarsi's opened it up again.

GILL. [*Worriedly.*] He oughtn't to come into this District.

MCQUIGG. He is in.

GILL. What'll we do about that brewery?

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MCQUIGG. Nothin'. I'm after Nick. And if he thinks he can lick me again, in this District— [*To* DELANEY.] Get back to that brewery, Jim, and find if Nick's stayin' here. He may be for awhile, till he gets his truck routes set. Buzz one o' that Prohibition detail about what he's goin' to do.

DELANEY. Give one o' those babies a dollar and he'd make a confession against himself. [*He goes out to the street.*]

MCQUIGG. [*Starting for his office.*] You don't know Nick Scarsi, do you, Lieutenant?

GILL. Not me!

MCQUIGG. You may. He don't like me. And when he's around me he usually drops in to tell me so. So as long as he's in the neighborhood keep the men inside the station awake, as well as those out on beats. It'd be a shame, havin' your station all mussed up. [*He goes out.*]

[PRATT *comes in.*]

GILL. All the responsibility back on me! [*He goes into his office.*]

PRATT. McQuigg putting him to work?

[DAVE AMES *comes in from the street, his topcoat turned up about his neck. He is twenty-three, eager with young enthusiasm, and full of an inexperienced, romantic capacity for surprise.*]

AMES. [*Going to the desk.*] Hello, Sarge. Anything doing?

SULLIVAN. Haven't turned a wheel.

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[MILLER *wanders in.*]

AMES. It's getting cold. And windy? In this town you're always getting roasted, frozen, soaked, and street-stuff blown in your eyes!

MILLER. Alice in Wonderland. Kid, you City Press?

AMES. Yes. I'm supposed to be here earlier, but I had to cover a campaign meeting. Of all the bunk!

PRATT. [*Advancing, and putting out a hand.*] Pratt's my name. Tribune.

AMES. [*Shaking hands.*] Dave Ames is mine.

PRATT. [*Waving at* MILLER.] Mr. Brisbane of the Herald-Examiner.

AMES. I'm supposed to interview the Captain on—

MILLER. Fancy that.

PRATT. So were we.

AMES. Then he hasn't given it out yet?

MILLER. No, he's been waitin' for you.

AMES. Then can we see him now? What's he like?

MILLER. Well, David, he's kind o' like Goliath. So you beat it in there and slay him with your questionnaire, and then skip back and tell us cubs who've only been in this business fifteen 'r twenty years the news, so's we won't get scooped, and have to tell our city-desks that David did it wiv 'is li'l questionnaire. [*He goes out to the street.*]

AMES. What did I do?

SULLIVAN. Don't mind him. He's one o' these-*vet*'rans!

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PRATT. Oh, he's all right.

AMES. Sure. [*Taking off his overcoat.*] I'm almost used to it now, anyway. [*There is the sound of a flivver turning into and coming up the alley alongside the station, right.*] That the wagon, Sarge? Maybe they've got somebody!

SULLIVAN. No, Schmidt's squad checkin' in, that's all.

AMES. [*To* PRATT.] Don't you think the Captain might say *some*thing?

PRATT. He can't. *Lèse-majesté.* You're new to the newspaper business, aren't you?

AMES. Yes, but I've studied it a lot, so— [*As* PRATT *smiles.*] In school, I mean. I took Journalism.

PRATT. Illinois?

AMES. No, Nebraska—where I live. When I graduated, my Dean told me Chicago was the best newspaper town in the world, so I stopped off for experience. Of course, from here I'm going on to New York.

PRATT. [*Drily.*] Of course. Well, we're still salty here. But you'd better forget everything you learned in Journalism school. They have Journalism in New York, I guess, but not here.

AMES. [*Grinning.*] I'm finding that out. But what I don't understand, is—

PRATT. You'll catch on.

AMES. I mean about the Captain's transfer. If what they say downtown's true— How do Municipal Authorities get away with that stuff?

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PRATT. It's all regular.

AMES. It's wrong, isn't it?

PRATT. [*Startled.*] What?

AMES. I mean— [*Embarrassedly.*] Well—

PRATT. Where they erred with McQuigg was trying to make a goat of a mule, that's all. This Captain's no reformer, Kid. He's taken his "legitimate," like everyone else. It's just that— You know who Nick Scarsi is, don't you?

AMES. I've read about him.

PRATT. Well, Nick's so cocky he gets on these old-fashioned policemen's nerves. McQuigg's pretty cocky, himself.

AMES. I know, but— How does Scarsi control voters? You'd think a criminal—

PRATT. He gives them their daily beer, so hallowéd be his name. Anyway, weren't you always fascinated by pirates rather than saints? [*To* SULLIVAN.] Come on, Sarge, give the Press the gossip, and we'll trek. [*He goes to the desk and looks through the complaint book.*]

[AMES *abruptly goes to* MCQUIGG'S *office and knocks.* MCQUIGG *opens the door, a report in his hand.*]

AMES. Captain— [*Putting out a hand.*] Ames is my name. City Press. We supply all the papers with news, you know.

MCQUIGG. [*Shaking hands.*] How are you, Son?

PRATT. [*Starting out right.*] Good-night, Captain.

MCQUIGG. Good-bye.

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PRATT. [*Smiling.*] No. Au revoir. [*He goes out.*]

AMES. Captain, if you're going to give out anything about your transfer—

MCQUIGG. I'm not. [*He turns back.*]

AMES. But, Captain—

MCQUIGG. [*Turning.*] Now, now, there's nothin' unusual—

AMES. Yes there is. Excuse me, but I've got all the dope.

MCQUIGG. You have, have you?

AMES. Yes, sir. And the public's got a right to know—

MCQUIGG. *What?*

AMES. Well— Maybe if the public knew about things like this, they'd clean them out.

MCQUIGG. Son, the public don't know it's alive, and don't care. I been workin' for it for thirty years. I know.

AMES. It might care if somebody would stand up and give it an example.

MCQUIGG. Well, well! Give it an example o' what?

AMES. Well, of— [*Grinning.*] Standing up! Telling the facts about these things.

MCQUIGG. Is that what you're goin' to do?

AMES. Sure. Except that my office told me the papers wouldn't print what you'd say if you did talk. They ought to print it.

MCQUIGG. They can't.

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AMES. That's what they're for, aren't they?

MCQUIGG. Not here. This is a growin' town. Nobody'll listen to anythin' but boosts. However, go to it, Son—if you can take it on the chin. But I can't give you that interview. [*He turns.*]

AMES. I don't agree with you.

MCQUIGG. [*Turning.*] You'll learn to—and get hurt.

AMES. That's all right.

MCQUIGG. This standin' up for things and fightin' other people's battles 'll only get you a smack on the nose.

AMES. You're pretty cynical. Well, I'm not.

MCQUIGG. Yet. [*He starts back into his office.*]

AMES. [*Smiling.*] I don't have to be, do I? [*There is the careening rumble and crash of a heavy truck tearing past outside, the sound of a shot, the crash of shattered glass in the entry-way, and as* MCQUIGG *jumps to and jerks the door open, disclosing broken glass on the floor and a pane in the window facing the street broken, there is a shout of raised, tough voices, "Hi-i-i, McQuigg!"* SULLIVAN *has jumped up.*] Must have been some of those campaign meeting drunks. There were some shots fired up there.

MCQUIGG. [*Drily.*] Yeh. [*To* SULLIVAN.] That's it. Let it go. [SULLIVAN *resumes his work. To* AMES.] If you want an interview, we've got some girls downstairs.

AMES. Girls?

MCQUIGG. I suppose they were, once. We tip the keepers off to these raids, but the keepers don't tip the girls.

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[AMES *cocks his hat, and goes interestedly out.*] Campaign drunks, hell! [*He goes to and looks up at the inside of the door. A bullet is imbedded there. He digs it out with a key, and bounces it in a hand.*] Some o' the Scarsi mob, leavin' Nick's callin' card. Sweep it up!

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. [*He starts out right.*]

MCQUIGG. When Delaney comes in, have him report to me.

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. [*Pushing open the door.*] Healy! Get a broom in here. [*He returns to the desk.*]

MCQUIGG. [*Starting for his office.*] Damn their cocky souls.

[WELCH *comes in from the street.*]

WELCH. Mac! [MCQUIGG *turns.*] Glad I caught you.

MCQUIGG [*Shaking hands.*] How are you, Judge?

WELCH. [*Laughing shortly.*] We'll wait till after Tuesday for that.

MCQUIGG. Well, Mr. Assistant State's Attorney, then. Has the Old Man located that [*Drily*] missin' secretary o' his?

WELCH. You mean Higgins? Oh, he'll turn up.

MCQUIGG. In what condition?

WELCH. These rumors about what happened to him are nonsense, Mac.

MCQUIGG. As far as that Organization of yours goes they'd better be, hadn't they, till after election, anyway?

WELCH. There's always dirty gossip. Why, Higgins was the Old Man's confidential—

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MCQUIGG. [*Interrupting.*] Yeh, what you are now, uh? Is that why you're talkin' to me?

WELCH. I can tell you better in your office.

MCQUIGG. This'll do. The City hasn't gotten around to installin' me a conference table yet. [*He sits down at the table.* A PATROLMAN *comes in with a broom and dust-pan, goes to the entry-way, and sweeps up the glass.* SULLIVAN *takes some reports into* GILL'S *office.*]

WELCH. You're not still hot under the collar about your transfer, are you? [*As* MCQUIGG *does not reply*] The Old Man thought you might be, when you didn't show up at that campaign meeting of ours tonight.

MCQUIGG. I never make those charivaris. They give me stomach trouble.

WELCH. Now, now. That attitude won't get you anything.

MCQUIGG. That's where I've got it on you, Welch—I don't want anythin'. Come on! What'd they send you to tell me? I'm not a jury. You don't have to soft-soap me.

WELCH. [*After a moment.*] All right. You'll go back to your old station if you behave out here.

MCQUIGG. What's the "behave" mean?

WELCH. [*Agitation characteristically breaking through his tight control.*] Good God! You know! [*He sits and draws his chair up to the table.*] Nick's taken over a brewery.

MCQUIGG. Yeh?

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WELCH. A mile west of here.

MCQUIGG. Yeh?

WELCH. Just got it through Washington. I don't know how.

MCQUIGG. No?

WELCH. We told him to wait—to stay away from you. The Old Man ordered him, himself. But he wouldn't. Not him! So it's up to you. Let him alone.

[A PATROLMAN *comes in with the swept-up glass and goes out right.*]

MCQUIGG. The hell I will.

WELCH. You've got to lay off till after Tuesday, Mac. We need Nick's river Wards. [MCQUIGG *snorts.*] You know what this Election means to us.

MCQUIGG. Yeh. Whether *you* Republicans have to take your head out o' the feed bag. But I don't care which o' you get in. You all smell the same to me, so long as you tend to your business and let me tend to mine.

WELCH. Nowadays our businesses mix.

MCQUIGG. I haven't had a general order about it yet.

WELCH. It's your business to lay off Scarsi now!

MCQUIGG. Is that what the Old Man told you to tell me?

WELCH. I'm asking you, myself. I'm running in this Primary.

MCQUIGG. Welch, you've always been decenter than most o' that crowd o' yours. Why do you stick to Scarsi?

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WELCH. I'm not sticking to Scarsi. I'm sticking to the Old Man. [*His voice rising.*] Why shouldn't I? He's helped me—put me on the ticket for County Judge. This is for him. And the quieter things are till after Tuesday—Nick's too influential to fuss with, that's all. And how he knows it! Last month he damn near kicked over the traces when they wouldn't let him be one of the official welcoming committee and ride down the boulevard in a silk hat with Queen Marie. Yes! And socially ambitious, too—changing that gold tooth of his for a white one! Sending that young brother of his to that snob college, East. Nick's got so big—

MCQUIGG. [*Interrupting.*] By usin' politics that are crazier than he is, and a Public that takes the performance as a hell of a funny show and don't know enough to come in out o' the rain. [*As* WELCH *starts to speak.*] But that's all right! That's the game.

WELCH. [*Rather wretchedly.*] Yes.

MCQUIGG. But Nick Scarsi's personal with me.

WELCH. Oh, it's all in the—

MCQUIGG. [*Cutting him short.*] I'd been runnin' that District o' mine for nine years when Scarsi moved in and made a monkey o' me by protectin' his rackets and his mob so close I couldn't even get murderers to trial. [*Rising.*] I fought that. That District was mine! But I got shot at from closed cars. A bomb blew off the porch o' my house. My wife's still gettin' 'phone calls tellin' her I'm goin' to be killed. [*After pacing a moment.*] One day Mr. Scarsi strolled into my station tellin' me to lay off one o' his men I had, and I threw

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him out. Then my good men got transferred. And when I got one o' his vice-presidents for rape—

WELCH. [*Interrupting.*] We know that.

MCQUIGG. *I* got transferred.

WELCH. [*Rising.*] You'll go back. If you forget Nick, that's all.

MCQUIGG. With him spittin' on my doorstep here? I will not.

WELCH. You've got to.

MCQUIGG. If I get my hands on him—

WELCH. They'll break you.

MCQUIGG. Who?

WELCH. The Organization. And what else can you work at? Think of your family. Do you want them hit—hard—by this? [SULLIVAN *returns.*] And here's another tip—when you can't lick an Organization, join it. Use your head. You can't just jam things through any more.

MCQUIGG. What?

WELCH. Nowadays, things operate [*Tapping his forehead significantly*] upstairs. [*After a moment.*] Glad I saw you. Good-night. [*He goes out to the street.*]

[MCQUIGG *scowls after him a moment, then strides to the door to the street, looks up at the bullet-gash there, slams the door, and goes quickly to his office.* PRATT *comes in right, followed by* AMES. MCQUIGG *bangs out.*]

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AMES. Is he mad? [*There is the grinding whir of a high-powered automobile turning into and up the alley alongside the station.*] What's that?

[MILLER *comes in from the street.*]

MILLER. [*Starting for the door right.*] Some cop's made what might be a good arrest. Man in a limousine. They were fightin' at the wheel as they turned in and damn near knocked over a lamp-post.

[*The door right is kicked open.* MILLER *jumps back.* PATROLMAN JOHNSON *shoves* THE ARREST *through and, following, spins him on to bring him up with a crash against the desk—a young, bit too-flashily dressed, Americanized second-generation Italian, nasty in his arrogance, mean, flushed with drink. One side of his face is scratched and swollen. Seeing him,* MILLER *starts and frowns, trying to place him.* JOHNSON *is without his cap, and is panting happily.*]

JOHNSON. There's your pettin' party, Sergeant. He had a hot car.

SULLIVAN. Yeh? Things are pickin' up. [*He goes into* GILL'S *office.*]

THE ARREST. It ain't my—

JOHNSON. Shut up. [*To* AMES.] Hello, Pr'fess'r.

AMES. How are you, Carl?

JOHNSON. [*Grabbing* THE ARREST'S *arm.*] What's your name? Come on. Spill it. [GILL *comes in, followed by* SULLIVAN.] Hot car, Lieutenant.

GILL. Yeh?

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JOHNSON. Yes, sir. That stolen Rolls that come in over the ticker this afternoon.

GILL. [*Glowering at* THE ARREST.] Oh—ho!

JOHNSON. Had another guy and a girl with him. They were havin' a scrap over the broad, I guess. The other one'd blown by the time I got there, and the girl beat it while I was gettin' this one under control.

GILL. Did you bring in the car?

JOHNSON. We had a little argument about it, but it's out back. [*He takes a small loose-leaf note-book from his pocket, tears out a sheet, and hands it to* GILL]. There's the motor number, sir—the same as reported for that missin' Rolls.

GILL. [*To* SULLIVAN.] What's the license number o' that Rolls?

THE ARREST. Jes', Lieutenant, I told him it ain't my—

JOHNSON. Shut up!

[SULLIVAN *hands* GILL *a slip of paper.*]

GILL. Uh-huh! Keep him here till I verify that car. [*He starts for the door right.*]

JOHNSON. It's that Taylor car, all right, Lieutenant. It's got his initials, W. K. T., on the doors.

[GILL *goes out.*]

PRATT. Warren Taylor! [*He takes the 'phone from the desk. At the 'phone.*] Wire.

MILLER. [*Snapping a finger in sudden remembrance of* THE ARREST.] I know you! Joe.

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THE ARREST. Damn right.

JOHNSON. Who?

MILLER. I'll use the booth! [*He hurries into the booth.*]

AMES. Carl, did you hit him?

JOHNSON. [*Grinning.*] No. He fell.

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] Superior oh one hundred.

MILLER. [*In the booth.*] Main five thousand.

AMES. [*To* MILLER.] Hurry up, will you?

SULLIVAN. What's your name, you?

[THE ARREST *sneers.*]

JOHNSON. [*Advancing on him.*] Lockjaw, uh?

SULLIVAN. What's your name?

THE ARREST. Wait'll I tell it to you, you big balloon! You'll burst.

MILLER. [*In the booth.*] Give me the desk. . . . Well cut in on 'em! I got to make the Home with this. [*He closes the booth door, so that his voice is muffled.* GILL *returns.*]

GILL. That's it. There was a special out for that car.

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] Give me the desk.

GILL. [*To* PRATT.] Taylor's a big bug downtown, eh?

PRATT. Just a millionaire.

GILL. [*To* JOHNSON.] Did you fan him?

JOHNSON. Yes, sir. [*He takes a small, pearl-handled automatic revolver from his pocket, and hands it to*

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GILL.] Nothin' but this, and a wad o' bills.

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] Bob? . . . Pratt. They just picked up that Warren Taylor car that was stolen. . . . Yes. . . . What? . . . No, some kid and a girl. . . . Well, the Herald-Examiner's making it for the Home. . . . All right. . . . Give me a re-write man.

JOHNSON. He's got the money. No identification.

[GILL *empties the bullets from the automatic into a hand.* JOHNSON *goes through* THE ARREST'S *pockets, takes out a large silver flask, and a roll of bills.*]

AMES. [*To* MILLER.] Give me a chance, will you?

GILL. [*Inspecting the bullets.*] Nasty, eh? [*To* THE ARREST.] Knock 'em over for good with them, eh? Eh? [*Handing the bullets to* SULLIVAN.] File these.

[SULLIVAN *spills the bullets into an envelope, makes a notation on it, and seals it.*]

JOHNSON. [*Unscrewing the flask.*] That's where you get your guts, uh?

GILL. [*Taking the flask.*] Hittin' it heavy, eh?

THE ARREST. Oh, for Christ's—

JOHNSON. Shut up!

[GILL *passes the flask and money to* SULLIVAN.]

PRATT. Officer! What's your name?

JOHNSON. C. Johnson. Write that in. My mother'll like it.

GILL. Come on now, you! Let's have a name and all about it, now!

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THE ARREST. Lis'en, I never took that car!

JOHNSON. Maybe he'd talk to me, in the back room.

GILL. He'll talk to me. [*Edging closer, his voice rising.*] What's your name, you— [*Grabbing him by the collar and shaking him.*] Come on! And without any duress.

THE ARREST. [*Knocking his hands away.*] Keep your hands off me, you stuffed-shirt bastard!

[GILL *precipitately steps back.*]

JOHNSON. Wai-i-t a minute. [*He steps to* THE ARREST *and slaps him swiftly, first with one hand, then the other, then an uppercut.*] And don't tell your mouthpiece there was any duress in that.

THE ARREST. You'll get yours for that, you dirty— [*Enjoying himself,* JOHNSON *cuts him off with a slap across the mouth.* THE ARREST *springs at him, but* JOHNSON *pinions his arms, and laughs.*]

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] Murph'? . . . Pratt, at the Tenth . . . McQuigg's new district.

THE ARREST. [*Stiffening.*] Is McQuigg captain here?

JOHNSON. That's who.

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] That Taylor car. . . . Yes. Story in the afternoon papers. . . . Patrolman name of C. Johnson picked it up with a kid and a girl in it— . . . No, she got away. . . . No name yet. . . . I'll call you back for the Final. [*He replaces the 'phone.*]

THE ARREST. [*Suddenly.*] Wait a minute, Lieutenant. My name's Camino.

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GILL. Camino, eh?

THE ARREST. Yeh. But lis'en, I never took that car.

GILL. What's your first name?

THE ARREST. Joe.

GILL. Where do you live?

JOE. Two one six six Artesian.

GILL. [*Threateningly.*] How old are you?

JOE. Twenty-one. Lis'en, Lieutenant, I'm clean on that car. Fellow that was with me— He said it was his, see? He was out with a girl o' mine and I—

GILL. [*Roaring.*] Who was the other fellow?

JOE. Well, he was— [*He stops.*]

GILL. He'll remember it. [*To* JOHNSON.] My office.

JOHNSON. Come on, Joey. [*He takes* JOE *by the arm and shoves him on into* GILL'S *office.*]

GILL. [*To* PRATT.] Ever see him before?

PRATT. Nope.

GILL. [*To* AMES.] Did you?

AMES. [*Astonishedly.*] Me? [*He shakes his head "No."*]

PRATT. Oh, your Camino's an amateur, Lieutenant. Stealing a Rolls when there are only about nine of them in town? And carrying one of those boodwah thirty-twos! Why, anybody who carries less than a thirty-eight in this town's a fairy.

GILL. Book him, Sergeant.

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PRATT. I'd wait if I were you. [GILL *turns.*] Didn't you see him collapse when I mentioned the Captain's name? He thought fast, but his name's not Camino.

GILL. Huh? [*After a moment. To* SULLIVAN.] Hold that up. [*He goes into* MCQUIGG'S *office.*]

[AMES *takes the 'phone.*]

AMES. [*At the 'phone.*] Line, please. [*To* PRATT.] Who's this Taylor? [PRATT *is eyeing* MILLER *in the booth.*] Pratt?

PRATT. What?

AMES. Who's Taylor?

PRATT. Big contractor downtown. Society. His wife danced with the Prince of Wales when he was here.

[MCQUIGG *comes in, followed by* GILL.]

GILL. There's somethin' funny. He was scared when he heard your name. [*He goes into his office.*]

MCQUIGG. [*To* AMES.] You callin' your office?

AMES. Yes, sir.

MCQUIGG. Stop it. [AMES *surprisedly replaces the 'phone. To* PRATT.] Did you turn this story in?

PRATT. Not the name.

MCQUIGG. Who's in the booth?

PRATT. Herald-Examiner.

MCQUIGG. Did he see the pinch jump when he heard my name?

PRATT. He didn't see anything.

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MCQUIGG. Neither did you. [*To* AMES.] Or you. [JOHNSON *comes in.*] Johnson, keep this quiet till I see how funny it is. Anyone who's afraid of me 's got lots of friends downtown. And *I'm* handlin' this station, myself. [*He goes into* GILL'S *office.*]

JOHNSON. Yes, sir. [*He starts for the street.*]

PRATT. Johnson? That girl in the Taylor car. Did you see what she looked like?

JOHNSON. No.

PRATT. [*Starting after him.*] Where are you going now?

JOHNSON. To find my cap! [*He goes out.*]

AMES. [*Taking the 'phone.*] Line, please.

JOE. [*From* GILL'S *office.*] I won't.

AMES. What are they doing? Third degree?

PRATT. Save your imagination till you're writing the stories. They'll pay you for it, then.

[MILLER *comes from the booth and starts for the door right.*]

MILLER. [*Jauntily.*] I told you somethin' would break out here, with McQuigg on deck.

PRATT. What's delighting you?

[MILLER *goes out.*]

AMES. [*At the 'phone.*] State eight one hundred.

JOE. [*A strained cry.*] I won't!

AMES. Now what about that third degree? [*At the 'phone.*] Give me the desk!

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SULLIVAN. Don't turn [*With a nod at* GILL'S *office*] that in.

PRATT. Just give them a flash. Here. [*Taking the 'phone.*] Do they know your voice?

AMES. I don't think so. They never listen to me long enough.

PRATT. [*At the 'phone.*] The desk? . . . This is Ames. [*He stops, then replaces the 'phone.*] They said to call back.

AMES. That's what they tell me!

PRATT. [*Smiling.*] Well, maybe they won't in New York.

AMES. Go on. Kid me. But I'll be a reporter in New York, and a good one!

JOE. *Stop!*

[*There is a short scream of agony, followed by a dull crash, and then silence.* PRATT *makes for* GILL'S *office and goes in.* AMES *starts after him, when* IRENE HAYES *comes in from the street. She is twenty-eight, beautifully bodied, sophisticated, hard, wearing a large solitaire diamond ring, and carrying an expensive purse and silver fox.* AMES *stops, recognizing her. She goes to the desk, but* SULLIVAN, *busy does not notice her.*]

IRENE. [*After a moment.*] Information, please.

SULLIVAN. [*After a look at her.*] Lost your dog or somethin', I suppose.

IRENE. Not yet.

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SULLIVAN. Well, then—?

IRENE. Didn't you just get a boy with an automobile? One of your officers came up about—parking, so—

SULLIVAN. Yeh?

IRENE. Yes, so the [*Gesturing*] boy friend, he thought I'd better go. [SULLIVAN *rises.*] But he told me if he had to go to the station to come over and meet him here. He said he'd only be a minute.

SULLIVAN. See the Captain. [*He goes into* GILL'S *office.*]

AMES. [*Removing his hat.*] How do you do?

IRENE. What are you in for?

AMES. [*Grinning.*] I'm a reporter.

IRENE. [*Bowing slightly with characteristic ironic amusement.*] I'm Irene Hayes.

AMES. Sure, I know who you are.

IRENE. I've heard that one.

AMES. I mean, I've seen you at Weiberg's. You sing there, don't you?

IRENE. Yes, I sing there.

AMES. Well—don't you like it?

IRENE. Would you?

AMES. I can't sing.

IRENE. Neither can I.

AMES. Oh, go on! I thought you were great. I was going to ask you to dance with me.

IRENE. Why didn't you?

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AMES. Oh, there were a lot of men at your table, and—

IRENE. They're part of the job. From ten to two!

AMES. Then I will come in. Some night next week.

IRENE. Yes? [*Coldly.*] What for?

AMES. Why, I'd like to see you again, that's all.

IRENE. I was waiting for that one.

AMES. What do you mean?

IRENE. And all you want's a nice, sweet friendship, eh?

AMES. With you?

IRENE. That's how they usually start. But, of course, you're not after anything more?

AMES. [*Backing away.*] No! That's the trouble with you women. I say hello to you or something, and you think I want to— [*He stops embarrassedly.*]

IRENE. Excuse me!

AMES. [*Jerking on his hat.*] I'd like to know somebody in this town, that's all!

IRENE. Heavens! Why?

AMES. I'm tired of being on the outside of things.

IRENE. So am I. That's why I'm engaged to Joe Scarsi—to get on the inside, quick.

AMES. Joe—*who?* [*After a startled look at* GILL'S *office.*] Are you engaged—?

IRENE. [*Interrupting.*] Well, of course, darling, that was before I met you.

AMES. Is he—in there—some relation to Nick?

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IRENE. His baby brother. Didn't he tell them who he was?

[MCQUIGG *comes in,* PRATT *after him.*]

MCQUIGG. No, I'm tellin' you—Camino's the name. Full confession, and voluntary. He says he was out ridin' so's he could make some girl.

IRENE. He didn't. [MCQUIGG *turns.*] Where is he?

MCQUIGG. If you mean this Camino—

IRENE. [*After a laugh.*] Don't you think I know who's my fiancé?

MCQUIGG. Maybe he gave you a phoney name. They do that regular now.

IRENE. Not with me. No, he told me to meet him here. He said he'd only be a minute.

MCQUIGG. He's goin' to stay.

IRENE. Oh. [*After a moment.*] Then I won't wait. [*She starts quickly for the street.*]

AMES. Tell him.

IRENE. [*Stopping.*] Keep quiet!

MCQUIGG. Tell me what?

AMES. She's engaged to that fellow in there. He's Nick Scarsi's brother.

[PRATT *grabs the 'phone.*]

MCQUIGG. [*To* PRATT.] Stop that! [PRATT *replaces the 'phone. To* IRENE.] So you're the girl in the car, uh? Then you can tell me somethin' about that boy.

IRENE. No, Policeman. I'm tongue-tied.

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MCQUIGG. [*Going to her.*] You'd better talk to me.

IRENE. [*Backing away.*] I'm liable to. Maybe you're framing him, but you'll not me. Listen! You get off base with Joe Scarsi and you'll get tagged out, like the last one who tried to take one of Nick's friends for a ride. Don't make any errors—

MCQUIGG. [*Cutting her short.*] Well, if you won't talk to me— [*To* SULLIVAN.] Get a couple of men in here. [*He seizes* IRENE'S *wrist.* SULLIVAN *goes to door right.*]

IRENE. Let me go!

SULLIVAN. [*Pushing open the door.*] Schmidt! Clark! [*He returns to the desk.*]

IRENE. Stop it, you—

[DETECTIVE SERGEANT SCHMIDT *and* DETECTIVE CLARK *come in. They wear plain clothes and soft hats.*]

MCQUIGG. This young lady's visitin' us awhile.

IRENE. [*Trying to pull free.*] Let me *go.*

AMES. [*Protestingly.*] Captain—

MCQUIGG. [*Swinging* IRENE *across to* CLARK.] Take her downstairs and put her in with the other guests.

AMES. Captain, those others are nothing but—

MCQUIGG. Orders on her'll come from me.

CLARK. Yes, sir. [*He touches* IRENE *on the arm, and jerks a thumb at the door.*]

IRENE. [*Rubbing her wrists.*] I'll telephone first.

MCQUIGG. No, you won't. That service don't come out this far.

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IRENE. It will. [*She starts out.*]

AMES. [*Going to her.*] Wait, I'll make a call for you if you want me to. I'm sorry! I didn't know they'd keep you.

IRENE. You little fool. [*She goes out,* SCHMIDT *and* CLARK *after her.*]

MCQUIGG. [*To* PRATT.] Now get this. [*To* AMES.] You too, Son! Maybe the fellow Joe Scarsi says was with him did steal that car. But I've got him, and I'm goin' to get him for that theft. If it gets out downtown he's here I won't be able to hang onto him an hour. They'll spring him on a writ o' habeas corpus or, if I book him, get him out on bail. I'm holdin' that girl as a witness, and I'm keepin' you here till I get this case set. Then you can 'phone your heads off.

AMES. [*Exhaling.*] Whew!

PRATT. [*Looking after* IRENE.] His fiancée, eh? Well, Nick will spank Brother's bottom for that. [*To* MCQUIGG.] You know, women are poison to Nick.

MCQUIGG. Maybe this one'll be dynamite. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Get Delaney back. I want him here. [*He starts for his office.*]

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir.

PRATT. Where do we sleep?

[MILLER *strolls in.*]

MILLER. Hi, Captain. [MCQUIGG *turns.*] How's young Scarsi takin' it? [PRATT *jerks alert.*] Jes', he's all Nick cares about—that kid. And him droppin' into your hands! We're playin' it big, too, believe—

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PRATT. Did you know who he was?

MILLER. Say, I made that "Camino" for Nick's brother the minute I came in. We'll be on the street downtown with the story in less than a half an—

PRATT. [*To* MCQUIGG.] You'll never hold him now!

MCQUIGG. [*To* MILLER.] Get out o' here!

MILLER. What's the ma—?

MCQUIGG. [*Going to the desk.*] All o' you!

PRATT. [*Grabbing* AMES' *overcoat, throwing it to him, and starting for the street.*] Come on. There's a 'phone at the Greek's. [*He goes out,* MILLER, *then* AMES, *after him.*]

MCQUIGG. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Keep two squads on station duty. Throw another one around that brewery.

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. [*He goes out right.*]

[MCQUIGG *starts for his office again.* WELCH *comes in from the street, breathing hard.*]

WELCH. Mac! [MCQUIGG *turns.*] I just called downtown. The Herald-Examiner's got a story that you've got Joe Scarsi here.

MCQUIGG. I have.

WELCH. Better— Better let him go before Nick hears—

MCQUIGG. I want Nick to hear.

WELCH. Mac, he's Nick's one soft spot—this boy.

MCQUIGG. Then this ought to make him squirm.

WELCH. [*Excitedly.*] You'll get yourself a suspension—

MCQUIGG. [*Sharply.*] What?

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WELCH. I— [*He stops.*]

MCQUIGG. You cracked about me gettin' suspended.

WELCH. I cracked too fast. But you are greased for a suspension, and— Now the order *will* go to the Trial Board.

MCQUIGG. What's the charge?

WELCH. What's the difference?

MCQUIGG. Who fixed it?

WELCH. Nick. [*Hastily.*] But I'll quash it, if you'll let Joe Scarsi go.

MCQUIGG. I'll mix with Nick to the finish now. Tell that to the *people's* Trial Board.

WELCH. Now, Mac!

MCQUIGG. Tell it to the Old Man.

WELCH. Wait a min—

MCQUIGG. Tell it to Scarsi! [SULLIVAN *comes in and return to the desk.*] Sullivan!

WELCH. What are you going to do?

MCQUIGG. [*Tapping his forehead.*] "Operate upstairs." [*To* SULLIVAN.] Put that girl in a crowded cell. That'll make her mad enough to talk. And book that boy— grand larceny, and carryin' concealed weapons, too.

WELCH. Nick will start something now!

MCQUIGG. [*Striding to his office.*] I'm starting somethin' myself. I'm ripe to fight. [*Turning.*] It's this country air! [*He goes out.*]

CURTAIN

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ACT TWO

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ACT TWO

SCENE—*The same, late the next afternoon. The order "Raincoats today" is chalked on the blackboard.* SULLIVAN *is busy at the desk.* GILL *is in front of the desk inspecting the complaint book.*

GILL. More trouble in twenty-four hours than I've had in years.

SULLIVAN. This auto theft's the first excitement I've had since we got that body that was dumped out o' that car on Western Avenue a year ago. An' that crime only stopped off while passin' through! [*Half to himself.*] Maybe we can use *police*men 'round here from now on.

GILL. [*Tossing the book to the desk.*] Is the night shift on?

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. Except Johnson. He's late.

GILL. Fine him. [*Starting for his office.*] My discipline —everythin'—turned upside down. [MCQUIGG *comes in from the street, wearing a police rubber raincoat over his uniform, and a soft hat. There is a day's beard on his tired, set face.*] Any more raids tonight?

MCQUIGG. What? [*After a moment.*] Oh. Yeh. [*He takes a long envelope from his pocket, and hands it to* GILL.] The houses are standin' for 'em, so don't let the boys get too much exercise. And this time don't bring

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in any exaggerated drunks, especially women—they get sick all over the station. [*He sinks to a chair at the table.*]

GILL. [*To* SULLIVAN, *inspecting the order he has taken from the envelope.*] Bring Schmidt's squad in.

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir.

MCQUIGG. There'll be an Assistant State's Attorney out to lead the damn things, for the publicity. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Is Delaney back?

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir.

MCQUIGG. Get him.

[SULLIVAN *goes out right.*]

GILL. Now—uh—[*Importantly.*] about these raids—

MCQUIGG. Get the time right. It's [*Indicating the order*] there—early, to catch the Sunday papers.

GILL. These newspapers ought to throw away their hammer and get a horn. They're makin' a stink-pot out o' this city.

MCQUIGG. Which, however and thank God, still has the finest park system in the world.

GILL. [*Approvingly.*] Right.

MCQUIGG. Have they bailed out Joe Scarsi yet?

GILL. No.

MCQUIGG. They will. But he goes up for trial on Wednesday, and by that time I'll have his case set.

GILL. Are we keepin' this Hayes girl?

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MCQUIGG. You're damn right. [DELANEY *comes in right, followed by* SULLIVAN, *who returns to his desk.* GILL *gives* SULLIVAN *the raid order, and then goes into his office. To* DELANEY.] Is Nick Scarsi here at that brewery today?

DELANEY. Yeh, and stayin', they tell me, till he gets his truck routes fixed.

MCQUIGG. Who's with him?

DELANEY. A driver for his own car, his personal barber —he's leery o' lettin' just anybody shave him now'days —and five or six of his "guns."

MCQUIGG. Are they behavin' themselves?

DELANEY. They were South tryin' to fix the County Patrols last night.

MCQUIGG. Anythin' else?

DELANEY. Somebody stuck-up that German's delicatessen on Sangamon Street this noon. But when all he could find was eight dollars, he left the money, gave the old Dutchman a crack on the jaw, and laughed like hell.

SULLIVAN. An' that German's yellin' yet.

DELANEY. They got a great sense o' humor, Captain, this Scarsi mob.

MCQUIGG. Yeh. Like that callin' card they left for me last night. [*Grimly.*] Well, Joe Scarsi goes up for trial next Wednesday, not next year. It took me all night and this mornin' to throw the switches for that. Did you get us set with a judge?

DELANEY. Yeh. Sherman. Nobody can get to him.

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MCQUIGG. Then if Miss Irene Hayes'll swear Joe stole that car—

DELANEY. Nick'll get to her.

MCQUIGG. I hope, by God, he tries it.

DELANEY. Well— [*Drily*] the Alderman's been in.

MCQUIGG. An Organization man?

DELANEY. Yeh.

MCQUIGG. Who?

DELANEY. Kublacek. He rode in last election on that hundred per cent American campaign.

SULLIVAN. [*To* MCQUIGG.] He said to tell you he'd be back.

MCQUIGG. [*Rising.*] Scarsi goin' into action, uh? Sergeant, is that patrolman—Johnson—in?

SULLIVAN. I'm never able to keep track o' him.

MCQUIGG. [*To* DELANEY.] How is Johnson, Jim?

DELANEY. He's all right. [*Drily.*] He's young.

MCQUIGG. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Better keep him inside for awhile. [*Starting for the door right.*] Bein' the witness against a Scarsi, if he's on a beat tonight he might be on a slab by mornin', with those "guns" out here. [*He goes out.*]

SULLIVAN. I told Johnson to be careful, myself. But do you think these bantams'll listen to me!

[PRATT *and* MILLER *come in from the street.* MILLER *is bedraggled from the rain, and extraordinarily tired.*]

PRATT. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Hi, Sarge.

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MILLER. [*To* DELANEY.] Hi.

[DELANEY *nods, and lights a cigarette.*]

PRATT. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Anything doing?

SULLIVAN. Haven't turned a wheel.

MILLER. I told you we were nuts to lope out here.

PRATT. Why did you come then?

MILLER. Well, Bright Boy, 'cause you did. Every time that half-wit we got on the desk hears of a Tribune man takin' a street-car he gets all a-twitter.

DELANEY. [*To* PRATT.] What's new on the election, Scribe?

PRATT. Nothing. Oh, a couple of women's clubs petitioned the Governor to send up the militia to guard the polls.

[MCQUIGG *comes in right, carrying his raincoat.*]

MCQUIGG. [*Stopping short. At Miller.*] You, uh? [*He starts for him, Miller warily hastening around the table for the door to the street.*]

[ALDERMAN KUBLACEK *comes in from the street—a heavy-set politician of the servile sort, exuding an air of excessive good-fellowship and sweat. He is neither well-dressed, nor well-washed, but carries plenty of cigars.*]

DELANEY. The Alderman, Captain.

MILLER. Just in time, Alderman. [KUBLACEK *automatically hands him a cigar.*]

KUBLACEK. [*With a wave of a hand to* DELANEY; *hoarsely.*] Thanks. [*Going to* MCQUIGG.] Your Alder-

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man, Captain. [*He hands* MCQUIGG *a cigar.*] Glad to meet y', at last. [*They shake hands.*]

MCQUIGG. The Press, Alderman.

KUBLACEK. [*Going to* MILLER *and* PRATT.] All the newspaper boys're frien's o' mine. [*He hands them cigars.*] Captain, I looked for y' at that meetin' of ours last night. [*To* MILLER *and* PRATT.] I got the Old Man himself out for that one. The church was jammed! [*To* MCQUIGG.] When I read about your pickin' up that auto theft last night I told the boys, "There y' are," I said, "what'd I tell y'? McQuigg'll give the taxpayers the pr'tection they deserve." Not that we got crime here, y'understand. I guaranteed the people a clean home neighborhood, an' they got it—not a speak-easy in the Ward. But they got a right to efficient p'lice pr'tection, an' when they get it—like you're givin' it to 'em, Captain—it's like I said to the boys, I said, the community ought to show their appreciation.

MCQUIGG. How?

KUBLACEK. I'm droppin' in to shake hands with y', an' that officer—Johnson—o' yours.

[JOHNSON *comes in down right, panting.*]

SULLIVAN. Where've *you* been?

JOHNSON. Grabbin' myself a couple o' hours sleep. I spent all night and this mornin' on a case o' my own I found. I'll clean it up in a couple o' more hours, the way *I* work, and then—

MCQUIGG. [*Drily.*] Fine, officer.

SULLIVAN. What're you workin' on? A kid swipin' an apple, I suppose.

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JOHNSON. Yeh? If I wanted to talk now—

MILLER. Why don't you?

MCQUIGG. Are you startin' again? [*He rises and starts for* MILLER.]

MILLER. [*Rising hurriedly.*] I got somethin' for you tonight, Captain. [*He pulls back his overcoat, exposing a bottle of whiskey in its inside pocket.*] Just off the boat.

MCQUIGG. Come in. I need it. [*He starts for his office followed by* MILLER, PRATT, *and* KUBLACEK.] Jim?

DELANEY. Nope. I'm on diet, of beer. [*He goes out to the street.* MCQUIGG *unlocks his office door and* MILLER *and* PRATT *go in.* KUBLACEK *starts to follow them.*]

MCQUIGG. [*Barring* KUBLACEK'S *way.*] There's your Officer Johnson, Alderman. You can give him that "appreciation" o' yours direct. [*He goes into his office.*]

KUBLACEK. [*Going to* JOHNSON.] Glad to meet y', Johnson! [*Handing him a cigar.*] That was a fine thing you did.

JOHNSON. Thanks.

KUBLACEK. Huh?

JOHNSON. For the smoke.

KUBLACEK. That's all right, m'boy. [*He gets a cigar for himself from a different pocket.*] I was sayin', that was a fine job y' did last night. This Ward's full o' respectable home-folks and healthy for kids, an' we can't have it polluted by law-breakers an' crooks. [*He lights his cigar.*]

JOHNSON. There wasn't anything about last night—

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KUBLACEK. You don't have to be modest with me.

[*The teletype whirs and writes.* SULLIVAN *tears off its sheet and takes it into* GILL'S *office.*]

JOHNSON. There wasn't anythin' to be modest about, or to brag about either. That's what a policeman's for, ain't it?

KUBLACEK. Sure, m'boy. But I wanted to drop in an' give y' the community's thanks.

JOHNSON. Anythin' else?

KUBLACEK. Well, now y' mention it, I remember some o' the more prominent citizens sayin' they hoped y' wouldn't be too hard on that lad y' picked up.

JOHNSON. I'm fryin' a bigger fish right now. Anyway, what happens to young Scarsi's up to the Judge.

KUBLACEK. But then you bein' the only witness—

JOHNSON. Yeh, that's what this other buzzard I got told me last night.

KUBLACEK. [*Hurriedly.*] But as I told 'em, I said, that's your business.

JOHNSON. It's the public's, too, ain't it?

KUBLACEK. That just exactly, Johnson, what a lot o' people who got influence feel about this Scarsi boy—that it's their business to give young delinquents a helpin' hand.

JOHNSON. [*Meaningly.*] How?

KUBLACEK. Mind y', *I* don't say it! But some o' the citizens—

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JOHNSON. Drive on, Alderman.

KUBLACEK. O' course, if it'd been a murder—anythin' serious—

JOHNSON. [*Sharply.*] What d'you mean, murder?

KUBLACEK. This auto theft.

JOHNSON. [*Relaxing.*] Oh.

KUBLACEK. I mean, if it'd been anythin' *serious* like that—

JOHNSON. I'm tickled to death it wasn't a murder. There's some chance o' him gettin' a couple o' years for stealin 'a car. Listen, Alderman, I know what you're up against—all you C. O. D. boys who have to do the dirty work for the Organization. So I won't ask you to come out with your proposition to see I get slipped somethin' good if I throw Joe Scarsi's case. One o' Nick Scarsi's own men tried that last night, and instead o' him gettin' me, I got him. [KUBLACEK *hurriedly gestures "Quiet."*] Joe ain't a drop in the bucket to the case I'm finishin' up tonight, so you just tell that big brother o' his to go to hell, will you? And tell him I told you! [*He starts for the street.*]

KUBLACEK. Officer— [JOHNSON *turns.*] I want to tell y'—if I don't put this over with you, they'll knife me, next election. And if this Scarsi kid even gets fined, I got to pay it out o' my own pocket. They told me. [*He drops to a chair at the table, the ash from his cigar spilling over his vest.*]

JOHNSON. [*After eyeing him a moment.*] Christ. [*He*

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goes out. KUBLACEK *starts after him.* SULLIVAN *returns. Seeing him,* KUBLACEK *stops.*]

SULLIVAN. [*Going to the desk.*] You can't bribe the young ones. They get insulted.

[DELANEY, WELCH, *and* TURCK *come in from the street.*]

DELANEY. Alderman! You ought to know Mr. Assistant State's Attorney Welch.

KUBLACEK. [*Hastily.*] Always an honor to meet the brains o' the Organization! [*He hands* WELCH *a cigar, feels for another to give* TURCK, *but finds none.*] Well —G'bye! G'bye! [*He goes out to the street.*]

DELANEY. What've got on for tonight, Welch?

WELCH. Nothing. Some more raids.

DELANEY. Yeh?

SULLIVAN. How are y', Turck?

TURCK. Overworked. [*He goes out right.*]

DELANEY. [*With a nod and smile after* TURCK.] So you're all set for Tuesday, eh?

WELCH. We're over, with the River Wards.

DELANEY. Scarsi'll swing those for you, won't he?

WELCH. Yes, but I've promised those thirsty foreigners there enough beer and wine myself to float the City Hall. They think they'll get it! Our names are on the top of the ballot this time. That's twenty-five thousand votes. And we'll get the nigger vote—that's sixty thousand, there.

DELANEY. But the reform gang'll get the—let's see—

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Swedes, Norwegians, Czechs, Hungarians, Lithuanians, Croatians, and whatever Americans vote. The Germans'll split. And the Democrats'll get the Irish, Bohemians, and Poles.

WELCH. But we'll stay in. The Captain here?

DELANEY. [*Going to* MCQUIGG'S *office.*] How you goin' to fix Joe Scarsi's case? [*He opens the door.*]

WELCH. It will be legal, anyway.

DELANEY. Welch, Captain.

[MCQUIGG *comes to his door, an official paper in his hand.*]

MCQUIGG. Well, Mr. Welch?

WELCH. How are you, Mac?

MCQUIGG. I'm gettin' better.

WELCH. You'll have a relapse if you go through with this Scarsi boy.

MCQUIGG. I'll be ready to go through with him by Wednesday, when he comes to trial.

WELCH. Wednesday trial?

MCQUIGG. Yeh. They had to give me that much, or I might talk about why I got dropped out here.

WELCH. They may have to give you more than that suspension, if you do talk. Mac, I told you—when you can't lick an Organization, join it. You'll only get hurt —more, bucking Nick.

MCQUIGG. I haven't been hurt yet.

WELCH. Neither has Nick. Or [*Smiling*] Joe.

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MCQUIGG. By God, you'll've earned that County Judgeship, if they're not. [*He returns into his office.*]

WELCH. [*After a moment. Briskly, to* DELANEY.] Well! How's the District?

DELANEY. We'll have more noise complaints after bedtime. Scarsi's got thirty trucks on tonight. Welch, why don't you get Nick to cushion his trucks? Don't you know some company that'd slip you some graft for a nice order of springs?

[SAM MEYER, *an unkempt, shifty little Jew, comes in from the street. He is in a state of perpetual anxiety, harassed.*]

SULLIVAN. What can I do for you?

MEYER. Sam Meyer, Sergeant. From Reilly, Platka, and Cohn. You got Joe Scarsi here? [*At his mention of* JOE, DELANEY *goes into* MCQUIGG'S *office.* WELCH *goes out right. Feeling through his pockets.*] I thought I had a cigar.

SULLIVAN. You goin' to bail the kid?

MEYER. I got his bond.

[DELANEY *comes in.*]

DELANEY. The Lieutenant'll fix him up. [*He goes into* GILL'S *office.*]

SULLIVAN. What are you, a bondsman and a lawyer, too?

MEYER. I was even a lawyer, but I got disbarred. [*He searches his pockets again.*]

[GILL *comes in,* DELANEY *after him.*]

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DELANEY. It's all right. The Captain don't want Joe, yet [*He goes out to the street.*]

MEYER. [*Finding the paper he had been searching for.*] See, [*Handing* GILL *the paper.*] Lieutenant. I got a release slip. Judge Wicks just approved the bond for this Scarsi boy.

GILL. [*Tossing the paper to* SULLIVAN.] Take care o' this. [*He goes out right.*]

SULLIVAN. [*Beginning to draw up the release papers.*] You runners for these lawyers have to be a little of everythin', uh?

MEYER. [*After a worried look at his watch.*] I got to be downtown at the Detective Bureau in a hour, for another one. Business is too good. [SULLIVAN *grunts.*] And when we got to serve habeas corpus writs, I'm a deputy sheriff, too [*He goes to the water-cooler and gets a drink.*]

SULLIVAN. A hell of a lot o' good it does us haulin' *in* crooks.

MEYER. You shouldn't go monkeyin' with the big ones.

SULLIVAN. In the old days, crooks were hard all right, but they were dumb, an' you kind o' liked 'em. Now they're smart, an' you don't like 'em.

[JOE *and* IRENE *come in right, followed by* GILL, *who goes to the desk.* IRENE *is carrying her coat, hat, fur, and purse and stops by the desk, laying them there as she puts on her hat.*]

JOE. [*At* MEYER.] Where've *you* been?

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MEYER. Now, now. Your brother—

IRENE. [*At* JOE.] "I'll only be a minute!" Ha!

JOE. [*To* MEYER.] What's that outfit o' yours think Nick pays 'em for?

IRENE. A great drag you've got!

MEYER. Your brother—

IRENE. That punk!

MEYER. Lady, please!

IRENE. [*To* JOE.] Who's he?

JOE. He's none o' your damn business, you—

MEYER. Lady, I got to do this.

GILL. Here, here—

IRENE. [*To* JOE.] Does that brother of yours keep him to dry you off behind the ears?

MEYER. Lady—

JOE. Nick's not runnin' me.

IRENE. I suppose the rest of your nurses are lost, or you'd have been out of here before.

MEYER. [*To* JOE.] Nick didn't know about this till noon, but he said—

IRENE. [*Taking up her things and starting for the street.*] Let's go!

GILL. [*To* MEYER.] What've you got for her?

MEYER. Nothin'. She ain't goin' no place. [*He goes to the desk and signs the paper* SULLIVAN *gives him.*]

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IRENE. [*Stopping.*] What? [*Advancing on* JOE.] Are you leaving me?

GILL. [*Distressed.*] We haven't facilities for women here!

JOE. Yes, and I hope you like it—high-hattin' *me* last night.

MEYER. [*Grabbing* JOE'S *arm.*] Come *on.* [*He pulls him on.*]

IRENE. [*Holding* JOE.] Wait a minute. [*To* GILL.] What am I booked for?

SULLIVAN. She's not booked, Lieutenant. Captain's orders to hold her, that's all.

IRENE. [*To* JOE.] They're trying to make me talk.

JOE. You better not.

IRENE. As long as they're holding me without a charge, can't you tell [*Indicating* MEYER] him to get me out with one of those writs they keep signed up?

MEYER. Please! Lady!

JOE. I could if I would, but I won't.

IRENE. Still afraid of Nick?

JOE. Damn it, I told you—*no.*

IRENE. I had you cured of being afraid of him, so there was something to you. But you get in a jam and cry for him, and leave me in with a lot of tarts!

JOE. Maybe they'll teach you not to be so touchy, so next time you're out with somebody you'll play.

IRENE. Not me, you cocky fool.

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JOE. That's all I wanted you for.

IRENE. What?

JOE. Jes', I kidded myself, thinkin' there'd be any excitement makin' you. *You* fool! Did you think I was goin' to *marry* you?

IRENE. [*After a moment. Ripping the ring from her finger.*] Take it, then. [*Throwing the ring at him.*] There's your jewelry.

JOE. [*Recovering the ring.*] All right. Now shut up.

IRENE. No, I'll talk fast.

JOE. Go on. [*He turns for the door.*]

IRENE. I will—about what you spilled to me last night when you were tight.

JOE. [*Turning.*] What?

IRENE. The only thing you did talk about. What Nick did to—

JOE. [*Hastily.*] Lieutenant! [*Going to* GILL.] The other fellow I told you about—he stole that car. But she was with him, so that makes her an accessory, don't it? [*To* IRENE.] Tie that. [*He goes out to the street.* MEYER *follows him.*]

IRENE. [*Looking after* JOE.] You dirty rat. [GILL, *sighing, goes into* MCQUIGG'S *office.* IRENE *drops to a chair at the table.*] Men!

[AMES *comes in down right, wearing a yellow slicker with the Greek letters of his college fraternity painted large on its back. His reporter's police card is stuck in his hatband.*]

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AMES. Oh, I was afraid you'd gone! [*He goes to her.*]

IRENE. Sweet of you.

AMES. What's the matter?

IRENE. If you hadn't told them who Joe Scarsi was I wouldn't be here, would I?

AMES. I told you how sorry—I didn't know they'd keep you!

IRENE. What did you think they'd do if they thought I knew anything about that car?

AMES. I didn't think.

IRENE. You ought to. Even at your age.

AMES. I mean, I did think it was right to tell them it was young Scarsi they had. I still do! Except that I'm sorry— [*He stops.*]

IRENE. [*After eyeing him curiously a moment.*] Listen, Boy Scout. If you keep on trying to do what's right—

AMES. [*Belligerently.*] Well?

IRENE. You're in for a lot of headaches, trying to figure out why everything you've been taught is right is wrong.

AMES. Oh, if you go by what other people say—

IRENE. [*Rising.*] I go by myself.

AMES. But just because this went wrong—

IRENE. "Just!" Nick Scarsi will frame me with that car, to protect this brother of his, he's so wild to make a *gentleman* of Joe.

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AMES. Frame you?

IRENE. Yes, Joe threw that at me when they took him out, among the rest of his bouquets.

AMES. They took him— [*At* SULLIVAN.] Then why don't you let her go? [*To* IRENE.] They can't hang this on you! I'll see the Captain. [*He starts for* MCQUIGG'S *office.*] He'll have to let you go. It's my fault.

IRENE. Oh— [*Wearily.*] Shut up.

[AMES *stops confusedly.*]

AMES. [*After a moment.*] Well—it's stopped raining, anyway.

IRENE. Doesn't it rain in Nebraska?

AMES. Sure. But not this dishwater. Now in New York— [*Enthusiastically.*] I always get a kick when I see that skyline, or Fifth Avenue in the sunshine, in a newsreel. It'll be different there.

IRENE. [*Looking up at him.*] Marvellous!

AMES. It will be! When I get to be what I want to be, I mean.

IRENE. Darling, I don't know what will happen to you if you ever have a baby and no one's tipped you off about storks.

[GILL *comes from* MCQUIGG'S *office.*]

GILL. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Put her back in her berth. [*He goes on into his office.*]

IRENE. [*Calling after him.*] Well, this time get me a lower, that don't smell!

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AMES. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Yes, you know some of those girls are sick down there.

IRENE. [*At* SULLIVAN.] And if you don't think so, take a sniff of [*Holding up her fur*] this fur! [SULLIVAN *nods her out right. She goes. He follows her.* AMES *leans dejectedly on the desk, looking after her.*]

[DELANEY *comes in from the street.*]

DELANEY. Hello, Kid. What's the matter with you?

AMES. I'm going to get the Department of Health after the conditions down there. [*He bangs out after* IRENE.]

[MCQUIGG *comes from his office with some reports, and goes to the desk.*]

DELANEY. Captain, anythin' for me?

MCQUIGG. No.

DELANEY. Then I'm goin' to go eat. [*He goes out to the street.*]

[SULLIVAN *comes in and returns to the desk.* PRATT *comes from* MCQUIGG'S *office, followed by* MILLER.]

PRATT. [*To* MILLER.] Oh, wait a minute. [*Going to* MCQUIGG.] Captain,—I've got another idea.

MILLER. Loud cheers.

PRATT. What about Taylor, the owner of that Rolls-Royce?

MCQUIGG. What about him?

MILLER. [*To* PRATT.] *What* about him? Jes'.

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PRATT. Lie down. We're on LaSalle Street with this story now, not in the back room of some joint.

MCQUIGG. Well?

PRATT. Will Taylor prosecute Joe Scarsi for that auto theft? What good's your getting the kid to trial if he won't?

MCQUIGG. What's it to you?

PRATT. [*Smiling.*] Well, my paper's hot after this Administration, and we're going to— [MILLER *makes a heartily indecent noise with his lips. At* MILLER.] Oh, it's not all politics, either. Just our characteristic snobbishness in feeling that there are people who resent being governed by a lot of God-damned hogs. [*After a moment.*] Even the most sophisticated of us get tired of living in a privy, it's so monotonous. [*To* MCQUIGG.] Captain, there are a lot of rackets beside liquor, crap games, and parking privileges in this town. Taylor's firm does most of the streets-and-alleys paving for the City Hall, and not without the proper connections. What if for Nick's sake they told him to lay off?

MCQUIGG. You damn papers quit rockin' this boat till she gets ashore!

PRATT. We want it to get to shore. We're ungodly highminded about Civic Virtue on my paper, since we lost the last election.

MCQUIGG. Yeh, no wonder the people think the newspapers are crazy, and kids play bandit after school instead o' policeman.

PRATT. Think Taylor over, Captain.

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MILLER. [*Wearily.*] Oh—h—h—

PRATT. Come on. I'll explain it to you. [*He goes out right.*]

MILLER. [*Following him.*] Write me an editorial. [*He goes out.*]

MCQUIGG. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Get up that Hayes girl. Quick.

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. [*He goes to the door right.*]

MCQUIGG. If she'll talk—

SULLIVAN. She ain't been doin' anythin' else. She's sore. [*He pushes the door open.*]

MCQUIGG. Well, maybe I'll get her sore enough to talk.

SULLIVAN. [*Calling.*] You, Bill! Get Hayes.

MCQUIGG. By God, if she'll come clean and I get her story in print, Taylor'll have to prosecute this case.

[SULLIVAN *returns to the desk. There is, again, the rumbling approach of a truck outside, and as it bumps past the door to the street a few tough voices raised in a yell of "Hi-i-i, McQuigg!"* MCQUIGG *stiffens, and jumps for the door, jerking out his revolver. He pulls open the door, but as the noise of the truck fades, replaces his gun.*]

SULLIVAN. It's still too light outside for 'em to shoot.

[A PATROLMAN *brings* IRENE *in.* AMES *follows.* IRENE *is carrying her coat, fur, and purse.*]

IRENE. [*To* MCQUIGG.] Listen, policeman— [*She starts*

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for him. MCQUIGG *gestures* A PATROLMAN *out. He goes.*]

MCQUIGG. Good afternoon.

IRENE. What's good about it? [*She throws her things to the table.*]

MCQUIGG. So they took away your playmate?

AMES. Yes. So why don't you let her go?

MCQUIGG. Who're you?

AMES. City Press. You know. I met you last night, for a minute.

MCQUIGG. So you did. You're still fightin' other people's battles, uh?

AMES. Sure.

MCQUIGG. Hasn't that general public o' yours even given you a nosebleed yet?

AMES. I'm more worried about my city-editor than the public, now. I almost got fired because I didn't turn that story in last night, till later, I mean. And the position I'm in at my office, I've got to be here to-day, so—

MCQUIGG. [*A gruff bark.*] So I'm to give you some "dope," uh?

IRENE. Let him alone.

MCQUIGG. [*Turning.*] Ho! Transferrin' your affections already, uh?

IRENE. He's all right.

MCQUIGG. What you can see in a newspaperman's beyond me.

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AMES. She's not having any picnic with policemen.

MCQUIGG. [*Eyeing* IRENE.] No?

AMES. You don't have to treat her like a drunk or something.

MCQUIGG. I told you, there's no feelin' in this business.

AMES. That's the trouble with it.

MCQUIGG. [*His eyes pinched on* IRENE.] Once your feelin's get into anythin', you *are* licked.

IRENE. [*To* AMES.] Don't you believe it.

MCQUIGG. They're lickin' you, aren't they?

IRENE. [*To* AMES.] Let these Big Thinkers have the Ideas. You keep the heart-stuff. And if no one else wants it, give it to me. I can use it this season.

MCQUIGG. Seems to me if anybody gave you any more feelin' right now, you'd bust.

AMES. [*Patiently.*] Do you have to talk to her like that?

MCQUIGG. Run along, Son. Run along. I've got to—ah—interview this young lady. [AMES *sighs and goes out right.*] Well, Miss Hayes?

IRENE. Why put me in with those hookers? Even if you are McQuigg? Oh, I know who you are, now. [*After a moment.*] One of those girls down there cried all night for her mother.

MCQUIGG. I know who you are, too, now, Miss Hayes. You used to stall—tease along the come-ons—for

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Beauty Parker's mob. And since Beauty went down you've been singin' at Wieberg's, and seein' Joe Scarsi after the show. You weren't there last night—told one o' the girls you were goin' to marry Joe. Tryin' to cop off a rich guy for yourself.

IRENE. Why not?

MCQUIGG. But you didn't marry him, did you?

IRENE. I'll get what I wanted without having to take on Joe Scarsi now.

MCQUIGG. You can get out o' here if you tell me about that auto theft.

IRENE. I'll tell that to Nick.

MCQUIGG. Tell it to me.

IRENE. I'm not stooling for policemen, yet.

MCQUIGG. Goin' back to last night—what made the noise that caused the complaint about that Rolls?

IRENE. Joe, the little [*Contemptuously*] gentleman, tried to—beat the wedding bells, and when he discovered he'd have to wait he threw a fit. None of these foreigners can keep their temper. God, they drive you mad! If that big brother of his had seen me—

MCQUIGG. [*Interrupting.*] Women talk too much for Nick.

IRENE. Nick! I've heard "Nick—Nick" from Joe, till I wanted to scream. You'd think Nick Scarsi was God and the Devil both, listening to Joe brag about what he pulls off.

MCQUIGG. It usually takes a woman to beat a com-

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bination o' the Devil and God, Miss Hayes. But you haven't, have you?

IRENE. [*Angrily.*] I'll—

MCQUIGG. [*Cutting her short.*] Nick's got you cold! And your Joe'll be home in a minute, dressin' for dinner in that exclusive North Side apartment o' theirs, laughin' with Nick at you—

IRENE. Nick's out here, at some brewery he bought. Joe told me.

MCQUIGG. And you're here, too, aren't you? In a dirty cell. Why, the Scarsis 've shaken you, made a monkey o' you. You'll be laughed at—

IRENE. [*Seething.*] Yeh?

MCQUIGG. Nick's laughin' at you now.

IRENE. Women talk too much for him. Ha!

MCQUIGG. But you're afraid to, when it comes to him.

IRENE. I am not.

MCQUIGG. Even with him turnin' this job on you, you're afraid—yellow, for fear of a braggin' wop.

IRENE. You're a liar.

MCQUIGG. [*Quickly.*] Then who else was with you in that car last night?

IRENE. Nobody! Joe Scarsi stole it himself.

MCQUIGG. Sullivan! Get that City Press.

[SULLIVAN *goes out right.*]

IRENE. Tell that to Nick, and tell him I'll tell it to a judge.

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MCQUIGG. Not so afraid o' him now, uh?

IRENE. No. No! Not after what Joe's told me about him. "Women talk too much for him." [*She laughs sharply.* AMES *comes in, followed by* SULLIVAN, *who returns to the desk.*] It's Nick Scarsi's own brother who's talked too much for him. Tell him *I* know what happened to the secretary of this Old Man they talk about—Higgins!—who [*Sarcastically*] "disappeared" last week, and then see if he'll try to frame *me* with this car his beloved brother stole.

MCQUIGG. [*Sharply.*] What? [*Stepping quickly to her, seizing her arm and pulling her around.*] What do you know about that?

IRENE. Enough to make Joe come through if you can find him again.

MCQUIGG. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Is there a squad in?

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. Anderson's.

MCQUIGG. Jump 'em out. Tell 'em to pick up Joe Scarsi and bring him back. [SULLIVAN *goes out right.*] Now let's go into detail about this, Miss Hayes, inside. [*He goes to* GILL'S *office, and opens the door.*]

IRENE. Charmed. [*She picks up her things and goes to* GILL'S *office.*]

MCQUIGG. Take a statement from Hayes, Lieutenant, about young Scarsi stealin' that car. Make carbons, and get 'em all witnessed and signed, this business is getin' so damn legal now'days. [IRENE *goes into* GILL'S *office. To* AMES.] Turn that in about Joe Scarsi steal-

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in' that car. But not the rest of it till I tell you. Hear?. [*He goes into* GILL'S *office.*]

AMES. [*Calling after him.*] But, heavens, I've got to! It's my— [*He glances at the 'phone, then goes to it, jiggling the hook. At the 'phone.*] State eight one hundred. [*There is the sound of typewriting from* GILL'S *office.*] Give me the desk . . . Mr. Brown there? . . . No, I've got to speak to Mr. Brown, personally, on this. . . . Well, it's Ames, then. . . . Ames. . . . You know! I work for you. . . . Mr. Brown, this Hayes girl— . . . At Captain McQuigg's station. . . . She just made a confession that Joe Scarsi stole that W. K. Taylor car. . . . I know, but— [WELCH *comes in right.*] Here's what's important. She knows what happened to that missing secretary, Higgins. [WELCH *stops, listening.*] She says young Scarsi told her. . . . Well, what if it is a rumor? The papers could print it if they found it was true, couldn't they? [WELCH *clears his throat and comes on,* AMES *glancing at him, then continuing despondently into the 'phone.*] All right, then. [*Replacing the 'phone.*] I'll keep on chasing your births and deaths!

WELCH. Won't they take your stuff?

AMES. Did you hear what I said?

WELCH. No. I saw your face. [AMES *snatches up his slicker and starts for the street.*] Don't let them get you, Boy. It's all in the game. I was a reporter once, myself.

[AMES *goes out.*]

[WELCH *goes to the 'phone, looks up a number in his vest-pocket notebook, and then takes the 'phone.*]

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WELCH. [*At the 'phone.*] Beverly nine three three three. . . . Who is this? . . . [*Lowering his voice.*] Scarsi? This is Welch. . . . At McQuigg's station. . . . This girl who was with your brother— . . . I know. But I'll take care of that. . . . I'm trying to find Taylor now. . . . Wait a minute! This Hayes girl has told McQuigg something about—Higgins. . . . She says Joe told her. . . . Of course he was simply talking. It's all insane. . . . But if any such rumors gain ground now—Hello! [*Jiggling the receiver hook.*] . . . Nick! . . . Operator! . . . Get him back, then. He's got to stay there! Beverly nine— [PRATT *and* MILLER *come in right. Blandly.*] All right, thank you. [*He replaces the 'phone. The typewriting in* GILL'S *office stops.*]

PRATT. [*To* MILLER.] Shall we interview this Hayes gal?

MILLER. No, she never shot anybody, did she? Anyway, [*Yawning.*] Nick Scarsi'd sue you for libel.

[AMES *comes in from the street.*]

MILLER. Hi, Pr'fessor.

AMES. Hello.

[WELCH *goes out right.*]

MILLER. [*To* PRATT.] Come on. Let's eat. [*To* AMES.] Take that police card out o' your hat. What d'you think you're coverin', a parade?

AMES. I've been thrown out of a director's meeting, two weddings, and three inquests because I didn't have it. But [*Grinning*] it got me a story this afternoon, all right.

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[WELCH *comes in, followed by* TURCK.]

MILLER. Where you eatin', Welch?

WELCH. That place at the corner of Western was good last night.

MILLER. [*Following him.*] Let's go.

[WELCH *goes out to the street,* TURCK *after him.* MCQUIGG *comes from* GILL'S *office with typewritten statements and hands copies to* MILLER, PRATT, *and* AMES.]

MCQUIGG. Miss Hayes' statement on young Scarsi stealin' that Taylor car. Spread that on a front page and see if Taylor'll dare throw this case.

MILLER. [*Eyeing the statement.*] And me with a ticket to the Chicago-Wisconsin game! [*He stuffs the paper in his pocket.* AMES *starts, ducks into the 'phone booth, and makes a call.*]

PRATT. They'll get to Taylor, Captain.

MCQUIGG. [*Starting for his office.*] To hell with even Taylor, if I can tie Scarsi with a new line I've got.

MILLER. [*To* PRATT.] Let's *eat!*

[DELANEY *comes in from the street, chewing a toothpick.*]

MCQUIGG. [*To* DELANEY.] Jim, take Miss Hayes out for somethin' to eat. Keep everybody away from her, and bring her back.

DELANEY. [*Going to the door right. Hurriedly.*] Just a second.

[MCQUIGG *goes into his office.*]

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SULLIVAN. [*Opening* GILL'S *door.*] All right, you—Hayes.

[IRENE *comes in.* SULLIVAN *returns to the desk.*]

PRATT. [*Following* DELANEY.] Now what? Is Scarsi after Hayes?

[DELANEY *goes out.* AMES *bursts jubilantly from the 'phone booth.*]

AMES. Nebraska won!

MILLER. [*Staring.*] What?

AMES. Nebraska beat Harvard.

MILLER. Who hasn't? [*To* PRATT.] Come on. [*He opens the street door. Sniffling.*] The wind's from the North tonight, all right—just full o' the scent o' some mute, inglorious heifer's end. [*He goes out.*]

PRATT. [*Following.*] Coming, Dave?

AMES. No, I've got to pick up some shorts.

[PRATT *goes out.*]

IRENE. Short what?

AMES. Stories. We call the little ones like deaths, births, accidents, and that stuff, "shorts." And then this Scarsi story's important. But, Lord, it's all like a canful of angle-worms to me! What *I* don't understand is—

IRENE. [*Smiling.*] You don't understand anything.

AMES. I don't?

IRENE. No. That's why you get such a kick out of everything.

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AMES. I'll get to understand it.

IRENE. No, you should have stayed in college longer.

AMES. I'm glad I didn't. I wouldn't have known anything. But I'll get *this* dope.

IRENE. Don't get too much. Just go on having Nebraska beat Harvard like that, all over the place. And don't let these other reporters shame you into being "wise"—crammed full of important, inside dirt. Or you won't.

AMES. Won't what?

IRENE. Be so full of breeze. Now, you're like a ride in an airplane. See?

AMES. Well, I have to—

IRENE. Be like everyone else, and know so much you can't believe in anything any more?

AMES. You don't believe in much, do you?

IRENE. Oh, I did, darling. Till I got black and blue inside. And damn tired.

AMES. [*Exasperatedly.*] Of *what?*

IRENE. Men. And their— [*Wrenching irritably.*] Why shouldn't I have used Joe Scarsi to get on the inside, safe? And when he was going to get me for that auto theft why shouldn't I get him first? Men live by this dog-eat-dog stuff. And when you're stuck in the middle of things that are run by men, you have to play their game. Or [*Dropping to the bench*] try like the devil. And then take a kick in the face because you can't. [*Lightly.*] Said she!

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AMES. Oh, you're not as hard-boiled as you think.

IRENE. Do tell! Give me a cigarette.

AMES. [*Getting out his cigarettes.*] Can you smoke these?

IRENE. If they're cheap enough.

AMES. They are.

[IRENE *takes a cigarette.* AMES *lights it for her.*]

IRENE. Listen. I'm sorry I took you so for-granted last night.

AMES. That's all right.

IRENE. [*Amusedly.*] Thank you.

AMES. You're welcome. [*Sitting beside her.*] I suppose you would think I was after you.

IRENE. Yes, *I* would. But don't you get so everyone can identify the kind you are by a glance. Just keep on being natural, Youngster. [*With mock gaiety.*] Be yourself!

AMES. I can be, with you.

IRENE. Go on.

AMES. I don't believe in much, either, except—well, standing up for what you do believe in, and getting some place with what you want to do.

IRENE. [*Smiling.*] That *is* a little, anyway.

AMES. Yes. [*Rising.*] But that's what they kid me for. What do *you* think?

IRENE. [*Rising.*] I think you—affect me like a mammy song! I—[*Laughing derisively.*] My God!

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[DELANEY *comes in right.*]

DELANEY. [*To* IRENE.] All right, Kid. Food. [SULLIVAN *comes from* GILL'S *office and returns to the desk.*] Come on.

IRENE. [*Eyeing* AMES *reflectively.*] It's a shame they have to grow up. [*She turns for the street.*]

AMES. Coming back?

IRENE. Will you be here?

AMES. Sure.

IRENE. I'll be back. [*She goes out,* DELANEY *after her.*]

SULLIVAN. "Anythin' doin'?"

AMES. [*Starting.*] What? Oh. [*Laughing.*] There's plenty doing in my head.

[MCQUIGG *comes from his office, his cap on.*]

MCQUIGG. I'm goin' to supper, myself.

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir.

[MCQUIGG *goes out to the street.*]

AMES. Who do you think will win Tuesday, Sarge—between these two Republican factions, I mean?

SULLIVAN. What's the difference?

AMES. There's another thing! Nobody even mentions the Democrats in this campaign.

SULLIVAN. Those donkeys're too busy fightin' among 'emselves to vote.

[*One of the desk 'phones rings.*]

SULLIVAN. [*At the 'phone.*] Tenth District—Sullivan.

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. . . Yeh, right here. [*To* AMES.] Your office wants you.

AMES. *Me?* [*At the 'phone.*] This is Ames. . . . Yes, sir. [*Enthusiastically.*] Yes, sir! [*Abruptly subdued.*] Yes, sir.

[JOHNSON *comes excitedly in down right.*]

JOHNSON. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Where's the Captain?

SULLIVAN. You, uh? Why the hell didn't you wait'll I told you you could go out on a beat tonight?

JOHNSON. What's the matter?

SULLIVAN. You were supposed to stay in here till we got this Scarsi set. The Captain himself said—

JOHNSON. Where is the Captain? When he hears what I've just cleaned up— [*He paces restlessly.*]

AMES. [*At the 'phone.*] Yes, sir—I know.

SULLIVAN. [*To* JOHNSON.] You can report anythin' you got to me. Now get back there, and—

JOHNSON. I don't belong inside!

SULLIVAN. You belong where the Captain puts you.

JOHNSON. Listen, when I crash through with what I got, the Captain'll put me in a safe. [*He goes to the water-cooler and gets a drink.*]

AMES. [*At the 'phone.*] Writs of habeas corpus? . . . Yes, sir. I know what they are. They get people who've been falsely arrested out of jail. They've got one for— *Who?* . . . But before he's even *arrested?*

SULLIVAN. Johnson! Did you hear me?

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JOHNSON. It'd look like I'm yellow, hidin' in here!

AMES. [*At the 'phone.*] No, the Captain went out to eat. But I'll find him. I'll tell him. . . . Yes, sir. [*He replaces the 'phone, and ducks out to the street.*]

SULLIVAN. [*To* JOHNSON.] Get in there! You bantam, you got a lot o' gall, but no brains—like all you young ones.

JOHNSON. No brains, uh? It took brains to grab off what I did last night and this afternoon. And then tellin' me to hide! That Scarsi mob ain't got any bullets that'll fit a hole in me! It's me that'll knock them, with this case I got. That ain't so dumb, is it?

[*There is the sound of a high-powered automobile coming up to and stopping outside.* GILL *comes in from his office.*]

GILL. Schmidt's squad in?

SULLIVAN. He's on the way.

GILL. Get these raid orders for him. [*He returns to his office.* SULLIVAN *starts after him.* A MAN *comes in from the street, hesitating at the door for a quick glance about the room. He is a muscular, hard-bodied, Americanized Italian of thirty-eight, in a slightly form-fitted brown topcoat and soft hat. He is smartly dressed, but under the knot of his necktie his soft, colored shirt-collar is fastened with a diamond barpin.*]

SULLIVAN. Johnson, you wait here. [*To* THE MAN.] Be with you in a minute, Mister. [*He goes into* GILL'S *office.*]

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THE MAN. You the Johnson that picked up Joe Scarsi last night?

JOHNSON. What of it? [*He starts for the door right.*]

THE MAN. Wait a second. [JOHNSON *turns.*] I came to see a witness you got—girl by the name o' Hayes.

JOHNSON. See the Sergeant.

THE MAN. But I might as well see you, too. I'm a friend o' that Scarsi kid's.

JOHNSON. I just told his last friend to—

THE MAN. Choke it. We don't want any trouble with you. You did your duty, but—

JOHNSON. That's a lot o' manure about "duty," too. I get paid for my job. I like it, and so I do it. If I didn't like it, I wouldn't be doin' it. I don't like crooks for the same reasons I don't like a lot o' other people, and because they banged my old man, and because, generally speakin', I'm a better man than they are.

THE MAN. Don't take it so personal.

JOHNSON. There ain't much that amounts to anythin' that ain't personal.

THE MAN. You must be kind o' young, talkin' like that.

JOHNSON. I ain't used to it yet, that's all.

THE MAN. Joe Scarsi's not used to it yet, either. That's why he's got to be looked after for a while. That girl you got kissed him into sellin' his own car to buy her a ring, and then— Playin' him for his brother's jack, that's all.

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JOHNSON. Why don't that big brother o' his look after him?

THE MAN. He tried to.

JOHNSON. Do you know him?

THE MAN. Nick? Yeh.

JOHNSON. Everybody knows him. But nobody meets him. [*Jerking up his belt.*] I'd like to meet the yellow—

THE MAN. [*Cutting him short.*] I thought Nick had lot o' guts.

JOHNSON. Guts, my can! These newspaper bad-men don't take the air without half a dozen armed guards stickin' to 'em. Catch one—two—three of 'em alone and you could slap 'em to sleep.

THE MAN. Yeh?

JOHNSON. Yeh.

THE MAN. Yeh?

JOHNSON. Yeh!

THE MAN. If Scarsi's so yellow, how do you happen to be hidin' inside?

JOHNSON. [*Curtly.*] Orders.

THE MAN. Afraid the witness'd get banged, uh?

JOHNSON. I ain't afraid—

THE MAN. [*Interrupting.*] You're cocky, for a kindergarten cop.

JOHNSON. [*His fists clenching.*] I ain't afraid o' Scarsi. Or any of his mob. And as for Joe Scarsi, no little wop's goin' to tell me who I can pinch, and grand-stand

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around about what he's goin' to do to me, and get away with it.

THE MAN. No?

JOHNSON. No! And that goes for that big brother o' his, too.

THE MAN. Yeh?

JOHNSON. And if you're from Nick Scarsi, tell him I told you. And tell him to quite his braggin', too, because I know how that Higgins—this political Old Man's private secretary—disappeared.

THE MAN. What? Where'd you get that?

JOHNSON. From one o' Nick's own men who tried to scare me into layin' off Joe Scarsi's case.

THE MAN. [*Quickly.*] Who?

JOHNSON. And after I gave him the treatment he spilled all the dope—how Higgins got his head blown off, because he knew too much. [THE MAN *turns slightly away, his right hand slipping into his left overcoat sleeve.*] Yeh! And in another hour we'll have the evidence, [*Turning away*] because I know— [THE MAN *turns sharply, jerks a .38 cal. blue steel revolver from his overcoat sleeve and fires at* JOHNSON. AMES *comes panting in from the street.* JOHNSON *gasps, his shoulders wrench convulsively, and he pitches on his face against the desk as* THE MAN, *jamming the revolver into his pocket, jumps for the door to the street.* AMES *comes to and springs at him. He smashes* AMES *in the face.* AMES *falls, but tries to tackle him.* THE MAN *jerks a leg away and kicks* AMES *in the face, then jumps into the entryway and out, down the steps, to the street.*]

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THE MAN. [*Shouting.*] Step on it!

[AMES *lies stunned.* SULLIVAN, GILL, A PATROLMAN, *and* ANOTHER PATROLMAN *burst in. The motor of the automobile outside accelerates and tears off with a grinding of gears.*]

A PATROLMAN. [*Shouting back through door right.*] Glick!

[SULLIVAN *pulls* AMES *up.*]

AMES. [*As he sees* JOHNSON.] Carl!

SULLIVAN. Who did it?

ANOTHER PATROLMAN. [*Over* JOHNSON.] For God's sake!

[GLICK, *a plain-clothes man, comes in door right. There is the sound of a flivver coming up outside.*

AMES. That man in here— [*Pointing to the door.*] There! There was a car waiting—

[GLICK *jumps for the street door.*]

GILL. [*Bending over* JOHNSON.] What the hell—what the hell—what the hell—

GLICK. [*Shouting from the entry-way.*] Schmidt! After that car.

[*There is an answering shout, and the flivver tears off.*]

SULLIVAN. [*Shaking* AMES.] Come out of it. Who—?

GLICK. [*From outside.*] Captain! Johnson—

[AMES *turns, sways a little, and drops to a chair at the table.* MCQUIGG *and* DELANEY *rush in from the street, followed by* GLICK *and* IRENE.]

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GILL. Somebody got Johnson.

[MCQUIGG *goes to* JOHNSON, *kneels beside him a moment, then rises and motions the patrolmen to carry him off right. They do.* DELANEY *follows them.*]

IRENE. [*Going to* AMES.] What is it? [*She goes to the water-cooler, soaks her handkerchief, and returning to* AMES *wipes the blood from his face.*]

MCQUIGG. [*To* AMES.] Did you see it?

AMES. I was just coming in—

MCQUIGG. Who was it?

[AMES *shakes his head.*]

GILL. [*Distressedly.*] Unidentified man.

MCQUIGG. [*To* GILL.] Keep [*Indicating* AMES.] him here. [*He starts for the door right.*]

IRENE. [*To* AMES.] Are you all right?

GLICK. Schmidt's squad's after 'em, Captain.

MCQUIGG. Which way?

GLICK. South.

MCQUIGG. Call that County Patrol at Ninety-eighth Street and tell 'em to block the road. [*He hurries out.*]

GILL. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Get me the Chief—personal—on this.

[GLICK *starts for the desk 'phones.*]

SULLIVAN. [*To* GLICK.] Use the booth.

[GLICK *goes into the booth and calls.*]

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GILL. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Give me a 'phone. [*At the 'phone.*] Box twenty-seven.

AMES. [*Still dazedly.*] I was just coming in— [*He rises suddenly, and starts for the 'phone atop the partition.*]

SULLIVAN. [*At a 'phone.*] The Tenth. Lieutenant Gill callin' the Chief, personal.

GILL. [*As* AMES *takes the 'phone.*] Here, you can't— [*He grabs at him.*]

AMES. [*At the 'phone.*] Wire. State eight one hundred.

IRENE. [*At* GILL.] Let him alone!

SULLIVAN. [*To* GILL.] Chief's secretary on the wire, Lieutenant.

GILL. I'll talk to him. My office. [*He goes into his office.*]

GLICK. [*Coming from the booth.*] The patrol's on the road, Lieutenant.

AMES. [*At the 'phone.*] Give me the desk.

IRENE. Keep your head.

AMES. [*To* SULLIVAN.] Did you look at Johnson? Did you see if he was—? [*At the 'phone.*] This is Ames, at the— . . . [*Desperately.*] Wait! There's a— [*Frantically.*] But listen! [*He stiffens, then slumps, and replaces the 'phone.*] They hung up on me.

IRENE. Call them back!

AMES. [*Seizing the 'phone.*] State eight one hundred!

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SULLIVAN. [*Jerking the 'phone from him.*] Don't turn that in.

[DELANEY *comes in right.*]

DELANEY. Sullivan! Get—

AMES. Is he— *Is* he?

DELANEY. He's dead. [AMES *goes to the table and drops to a chair. To* SULLIVAN.] The Captain's orders—no report on this till he gives the word. [*To* GLICK.] Keep it quiet. [*He goes out right.*]

AMES. [*Jumping up.*] *Do* something. He's dead, you fools!

GLICK. [*Pushing him down.*] Sit down.

AMES. He oughtn't to be out there—just lying there—like that. [*His voice rising.*] How do you know he's dead? Maybe he's bleeding to— [*Jumping up.*] Isn't there even a doctor out here? God *damn* this town!

GLICK. What the hell's the matter with you?

IRENE. [*Pushing* GLICK *aside.*] Growing pains. [*She gets* AMES *into a chair.*] They have to wait for the Coroner.

AMES. I was just coming in—

[GILL *comes from his office.*]

GILL. [*Over* AMES.] Stand up. Now, who—? [AMES *gets up.*] Here! Don't be a baby about this.

GLICK. This ain't the first time. You better get used to it.

AMES. Used to it? Pretend I haven't got any insides?

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[*Pulling himself together.*] All right. I'll get hard. I'll get hard-boiled. [*Turning to* GILL.] Hard-boiled as hell's what I'll get! [*Abruptly going to* GILL.] You get a doctor or— *Do* something! You hear me?

[GILL *precipitately steps back.*]

IRENE. Come on! [*She takes* AMES' *arm.*] Some coffee. [*She starts him for the door to the street.*]

GILL. You can't take him!

IRENE. Who says so?

GILL. Glick!

IRENE. I'll bring him back. [*She takes* AMES *out.*]

GILL. [*To* GLICK.] You bring him back, yourself.

[SCHMIDT *comes in, panting, from the street.*]

SCHMIDT. Got one of 'em, Lieutenant.

[GLICK *goes out.*]

GILL. Oh, Schmidt! [*To* SULLIVAN.] Get the Captain.

[SULLIVAN *goes to the door right.*]

SCHMIDT. [*Pushing back his hat, and wiping his forehead with his sleeve.*] What come off in here?

SULLIVAN. [*Calling out right.*] Schmidt, Captain.

SCHMIDT. We was just turnin' in, when— [MCQUIGG *comes in, followed by* DELANEY. SULLIVAN *returns to the desk.*] Got one of 'em, sir. Clark and me. We was just drivin' in, when—

MCQUIGG. Where's the other one?

SCHMIDT. Ross's after him.

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MCQUIGG. Where's the one you got?

SCHMIDT. Clark's bringin' him in. We was just drivin' in when one of 'em—I don't know which—comes down the steps with a yell at the driver in the car. The car lights out South, the one that come down the steps makin' a dive for the runnin' board, and they tear.

MCQUIGG. Where'd you get 'em?

SCHMIDT. They got stopped by a freight at that crossin' at Eighty-sixth and Halsted, and jumped for a getaway. One of 'em flipped the freight. That's the one Ross's after. The other one cuts across a prairie. Clark and me got him.

GILL. [*To* MCQUIGG.] I just talked to the Chief's sec—

CLARK'S VOICE. [*Outside the entry-way.*] Get in there!

[CLARK *comes in, a sawed-off shotgun in each hand.* THE MAN *who shot* JOHNSON *follows him, his hat pulled down to shade his eyes.* ANOTHER PATROLMAN *is at his side.*]

MCQUIGG. [*To* CLARK.] Did you fan him? [*His eyes are pinched on* THE MAN.]

CLARK. Yes, sir. If he had a rod he threw it away.

MCQUIGG. [*To* SCHMIDT.] Take some men, Sergeant, with flashlights, and find it. You know the way they drove.

[SCHMIDT *and* ANOTHER PATROLMAN *go out right.*]

CLARK. [*Handing the shotguns to* GILL.] They had these in the car.

MCQUIGG. [*To* CLARK.] Get on [*Indicating the entry-*

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way.] that door, and keep everybody out o' here. [CLARK *goes into the entry-way. To* GILL *and* SULLIVAN.] Nothin' about this to headquarters till I give the word. [*He steps to* THE MAN *and knocks up his hat.*] Hello, Nick.

SCARSI. Good evenin', Mac. You like it out here?

MCQUIGG. I'm beginnin' to. Thanks for not askin' me why I'm here.

SCARSI. You're not a gover'ment cop—dumb. What's the matter? That driver o' mine pull somethin' off in here?

MCQUIGG. Somebody did.

SCARSI. What'd he do?

MCQUIGG. Who?

SCARSI. "Breeze" Enright. My driver I sent in here.

MCQUIGG. I thought Enright was down for some bank job.

SCARSI. He must've got paroled.

MCQUIGG. Yeh. A lot do, since they equipped that penitentiary with revolvin' doors. What brought Enright in here?

SCARSI. I sent him to see that girl you got about how much she wants to lay off that brother o' mine. And—Yeh, I told him to see that copper—Johnson—o' yours, too, since I heard you were keepin' him in.

MCQUIGG. I wanted him in, knowin' what he was up against. But we haven't got this protection business down as efficient as you—big-businessmen!

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SCARSI. Big-business runs this country. I'd get wise if I were you.

MCQUIGG. I am.

SCARSI. What do you want him for?

MCQUIGG. Who?

SCARSI. Enright.

MCQUIGG. I don't want him.

SCARSI. Then if he didn't pull something—?

MCQUIGG. Somebody did, and, by God, I got you!

SCARSI. Are you so sore about your transfer you're thinkin' o' hangin' somethin' on to me?

[AMES *comes in from the street.* CLARK *tries to stop him.*]

AMES. [*Pushing* CLARK *aside.*] Let me in! Captain, I know. That man who came in— [*Seeing* SCARSI, *he stiffens.*] That's him. He did it.

SCARSI. What?

MCQUIGG. Now, Nick! How'll you alibi this?

AMES. Is *he*—?

MCQUIGG. [*To* DELANEY.] Lock him up.

SCARSI. What's the charge?

MCQUIGG. Same old thing for you. Murder.

SCARSI. [*After a moment.*] All right. I'll call my lawyer. [*He starts for the 'phone on the partition.* MCQUIGG *motions to* DELANEY. DELANEY *blocks* SCARSI.]

MCQUIGG. Forget who he is.

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[SAM MEYER *comes wearily in from the street.*]

MEYER. Back again.

SCARSI. Where the hell've you been?

MEYER. I couldn't help it, Mr. Scarsi.

MCQUIGG. [*To* MEYER.] Who're you?

MEYER. Sam Meyer, Captain, from Reilly, Platka and Cohn. But I'm a deputy sheriff now. [*Taking a paper from his pocket.*] I got a writ o' habeas corpus to take him out.

AMES. [*To* MCQUIGG.] I tried to tell you. My office 'phoned me—

SCARSI. [*To* MCQUIGG.] "Efficiency." Do you imagine, for God's sake, I don't leave word where I'll be? They know what to do when I'm late reportin' in.

MEYER. [*Handing the writ summons to* MCQUIGG.] All legal. Just issued by Judge—

MCQUIGG. [*To* DELANEY.] Take [*Indicating* SCARSI] him down!

SCARSI. McQuigg!

MCQUIGG. [*Unheeding.*] Hang onto [*Indicating* AMES] that boy.

SCARSI. [*Shoving* DELANEY *aside.*] Didn't you hear him about that writ?

MCQUIGG. Try and serve it.

SCARSI. Are you trying to trick me?

MCQUIGG. No, that's your way—in the dark, so's you can hide, and frame, and fix, and grab, till everybody's

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rotten with fear and don't-give-a-damn, and a man can't call his soul his own. It's the racket o' this whole damn town. But I'm through.

SCARSI. Not yet. [*Snatching the writ from* MEYER, *he extends it to* MCQUIGG.] You got to recognize a writ. That's the law.

MCQUIGG. [*After a moment.*] I'm licked again by due process o' law, uh? Well— [*Seizing and tearing up the writ.*] I'm sick o' the law. We'll fight this out here.

SCARSI. You'll get contempt o' court for that. [*To* MEYER.] Go 'phone that to the judge.

[MEYER *turns for the door.*]

MCQUIGG. Jim!

DELANEY. [*To* CLARK.] Hi! [*He trips up* MEYER *and, as he falls, pushes him to* CLARK, *who mixes with him and shoves him back to* DELANEY.]

SCARSI. Look out! They're framin' you!

DELANEY. [*Jerking* MEYER *up by the collar.*] Pickin' a fight, uh? *Drunk,* uh?

MCQUIGG. Lock him up till he sobers up!

DELANEY. [*Getting* MEYER *to the door right.*] Reilly, Platka, and Cohn resistin' arrest, uh? The Department's been wantin' a crack at that outfit. [*He gets him out.*]

CURTAIN

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ACT THREE

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UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

ACT THREE

SCENE—*The Captain's office a few minutes later—a narrow room, high-ceilinged and finished like that of Acts I and II, with the same kind of high, arched window with an old cracked green blind pulled down at left; a door opening in from the outer room back center; and another door, opening out, at right.* [*When the center door is open,* SULLIVAN'S *desk and the light over it can be seen across the outer room.*] *This side of the window is a radiator, its pipe running up through the ceiling.*

A small, old-fashioned roll-top desk, and a swivel chair with an overstuffed black leather cushion is back left, a chair by the radiator up left, and back right a black leather overstuffed couch, its raised head toward the door right. On the wall over the couch is a large Board of Election Commissioners' map of Chicago showing Wards and Precincts only. On the desk is a telephone; on top of the desk old directories, and a pile of old newspapers; and over it a large calender reading

NOVEMBER

3

SATURDAY

The pigeon holes of the desk are stuffed with a dusty accumulation of papers, envelopes, and files. There is a

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buzzer in the right side of the desk. A spittoon like that in the outer room is between the desk and center door. The chandelier hanging from the center of the ceiling, controlled by a push button in the wall left of the center door, is also like that in the outer room.

MCQUIGG *comes in center, followed by* DELANEY, *removes his cap, and tosses it to the desk.*

DELANEY. Nick's put the whole Organization in a trap with this job.

MCQUIGG. Yeh. They'll have to be with me this time.

DELANEY. [*Impatiently.*] What'll they do?

MCQUIGG. What can they do?

DELANEY. What they always do—ride us down.

MCQUIGG. No. This time, by God, I'll use their machine myself to push Scarsi to trial.

DELANEY. Even gettin' him to trial won't wash Nick up.

MCQUIGG. It's as far as I can take him, bein' only a policeman. But that far he goes. [*He pushes the buzzer on the desk.*] Now get after Schmidt and see if he's found Nick's gun.

DELANEY. Yes, sir.

[SULLIVAN *comes in center,* DELANEY *goes out.*]

MCQUIGG. Send Scarsi in. And a couple o' men.

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. [*He goes out.*]

[A PATROLMAN *and* ANOTHER PATROLMAN *come in.*]

MCQUIGG. [*To a* PATROLMAN.] Get on [*Indicating*

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door right] that door. [*The* PATROLMAN *goes to door right and out. To* ANOTHER PATROLMAN.] You there. [ANOTHER PATROLMAN *goes out center, standing back to let* SCARSI *in, then closes the door, remaining outside.*]

MCQUIGG. I finally got you, Nick. And I wanted to. But not for this.

SCARSI. So that copper o' yours got killed?

MCQUIGG. Yeh.

SCARSI. What do you suppose he tried to do to that chauffeur o' mine?

MCQUIGG. Still stickin' to that stall! So when that reporter made you, he mistook you for Enright, uh?

SCARSI. That's it.

MCQUIGG. How much did that cost you, gettin' Enright out?

SCARSI. So long as we're bein' frank, plenty, these politicians got such a lech' for jack! [*He sits in the chair, taking out and lighting a cigar.*]

MCQUIGG. They must think we're playin' ping-pong, battin' these punks back at us as fast as we bat 'em in.

SCARSI. Why don't you make a complaint to the Reform gang. It'd give 'em another statistic.

MCQUIGG. Those old women've been gatherin' statistics for fifteen years!

SCARSI. It'd help you more if they'd furnish you juries, eh? [MCQUIGG *grunts.*] The trouble the Criminal Court has in gettin' a jury now, it looks like the public imagined bein' a juror in these cases wasn't safe.

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MCQUIGG. It's not, is it, when if you don't like 'em they're liable to disappear.

SCARSI. Nobody's got any guts. I'm surprised "Breeze" Enright had enough to bang that cop.

MCQUIGG. I didn't know Enright was a killer.

SCARSI. Times've changed. You can get by with it better now.

MCQUIGG. Yeh. We've got to do [*Sarcastically*] thinkin', to keep up with you.

SCARSI. I'll take anythin' you four-thousand-dollar-a-year harps can think up for me.

MCQUIGG. Shut up, you peacock, and get this! I've got a lot o' bones to pick with you. [SCARSI *laughs.*] Oh, I know you're powerful. You've got a lot o' political sluts on their backs.

SCARSI. And takin' candy.

MCQUIGG. And they've got a lot of our leadin' businessmen on *their* backs, takin' candy from them. But I don't like that kind o' candy.

SCARSI. No?

MCQUIGG. And when my job makes me swallow it, I'm sick till I get it up again. This time I'm goin' to get it up with such a commotion that hereafter it'll leave me alone.

SCARSI. Yeh?

MCQUIGG. And I'm gettin' you out o' my system at the same time.

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SCARSI. [*Rising.*] Gettin' *me* out o' your system. You got any idea they'll let you lock me up?

MCQUIGG. Why, with you out o' the way I'll feel like a kid again.

SCARSI. You don't imagine I'm goin' to hang or anythin', do you?

MCQUIGG. No.

SCARSI. Not these days.

MCQUIGG. No, the [*Contemptuously*] law wouldn't let you. But there just might be even a chance o' that once this election's out o' the way and the powers-that-be quit shakin' at mention o' your name. Yeh, and prosecuted by Welch! [*He laughs.*] That'd give the whole Department a laugh, and we could use some laughin' in this business now.

SCARSI. Don't make me laugh. Where is Welch? I know he's here, for raids.

MCQUIGG. They can't fix this.

SCARSI. He'll have to.

MCQUIGG. [*After a moment.*] H'm. They couldn't take the chance! [*He abruptly rises and open the center door.*] Sullivan! [*To* SCARSI.] All right. You asked for Welch. [SULLIVAN *comes to the door.*] Send around to the restaurant at the corner o' Western and get Mr. Assistant State's Attorney Welch. [*His eyes on* SCARSI.] We'll see what he can do.

SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. [*He goes out.*]

SCARSI. He'll take care o' me.

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MCQUIGG. [*Going to door right.*] He'll take care o' himself. He'll take care o' me! [SCARSI *laughs.*] Go on. You'll laugh yourself to death. [*Opening the door. To the patrolman there.*] Put him in the bull-pen where he'll be handy.

SCARSI. You ought to be in the Marines. [*He goes out.*]

[*There is a commotion outside the center door. It flies open,* PRATT *and* MILLER *trying to push past the* PATROLMAN there.]

PRATT. Captain—

MCQUIGG. [*To the* PATROLMAN.] All right.

MILLER. [*Shoving the* PATROLMAN *aside.*] Horses! [*He gets in.*]

[*The* PATROLMAN *withdraws.* PRATT *comes in.*]

PRATT. We called our office from the restaurant—

MILLER. Thank God.

PRATT. Who killed this cop?

MCQUIGG. Did you give this shootin' out?

MILLER. Headquarters's got it, downtown.

MCQUIGG. Now who the hell—? [*He goes to his desk.*]

PRATT. [*Following him.*] And when we told Welch—

MILLER. [*Following.*] I thought he was goin' to faint.

PRATT. Have you identified your pinch?

MCQUIGG. Who said I had a pinch?

PRATT. Half the neighborhood. The street out front's packed.

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MCQUIGG. Damn!

MILLER. Oh, nobody spilled the pinch's name.

PRATT. No one had to, this is such a typical Scarsi job. Welch saw that.

MCQUIGG. Where is Welch?

MILLER. He stopped to 'phone.

PRATT. Captain, if you can nail Scarsi for this, the Organization won't sleep tonight. And if they try to spring him, the stuff we'll print may rouse a few of the last of the Anglo-Saxons into voting, anyway.

MCQUIGG. I'll give you the story after I talk to Welch.

MILLER. Jes', this time make it somethin' we can print.

PRATT. [*Starting for the door.*] We've got plenty of time.

MILLER. [*Following him.*] Yeh, it was nice of him to pull it so early. [PRATT *goes out. To* MCQUIGG.] You know, Captain, this one makes fourteen policemen killed so far this year.

[A PATROLMAN *comes in.*]

A PATROLMAN. Hayes, sir.

[IRENE *comes in.* A PATROLMAN *goes out.*]

IRENE. [*To* MCQUIGG.] I want to talk to you.

[MILLER *stops interrogatively.*]

MCQUIGG. [*To* MILLER.] Travel. [MILLER *goes out.*]

IRENE. Have you got to keep this Ames boy here?

MCQUIGG. He's the witness.

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IRENE. For you to tie Scarsi with. But I don't care about Scarsi. I do, him.

MCQUIGG. So do I, if he can make his identification stick.

IRENE. Do you want him killed, too? [MCQUIGG *sits down at the desk.*] You know what Scarsi will do to him.

MCQUIGG. I'll take him through this.

IRENE. Can't you think of anyone but yourselves? You and Nick Scarsi both. So cocky you kill a policeman trying to get at each other's throats, and show this boy so much—

[AMES *comes in center, a piece of adhesive plaster over the cut on his head.*]

AMES. [*To* IRENE.] Listen, I told you not to look after me. I'm all right. But— Apparently nothing else is here! Captain, I saw Johnson. He's— [*Incredulously*] smiling! [*His voice rising.*] Nobody seems to realize that somebody's been killed. And the one who did it giggling over it, and everyone calling him by his first name.

MCQUIGG. Havin' a tough time of it, aren't you?

AMES. Aren't you—with the public hiring you to protect them and then not giving a damn whether you do or not?

MCQUIGG. Yeh.

IRENE. They can't do anything. Not to Scarsi.

AMES. Maybe you can't do anything—the way things

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are, I mean. I don't know. I don't know anything, anymore. But somebody's got to try to, haven't they?

IRENE. Not you.

AMES. Yes, me.

IRENE. Because of your pride, or your honor, or whatever it is you men call your lack of sense? [*To* MCQUIGG.] You're in this. Tangling [*Indicating* AMES] him in these *manly* principles of yours until he's afraid to run away from even being killed. Make him go! [*To* AMES.] Tell him you won't testify!

AMES. I've got to. I'll identify him, Captain. I'll testify.

MCQUIGG. [*Rising.*] Good boy.

AMES. [*To* IRENE.] Oh, I *have* to!

IRENE. All right. [*After a shrug. To* MCQUIGG.] Count me in, too, then. I'll try fighting again, myself. And [*Her eyes on* AMES.] if Scarsi tries anything, I'll do some testifying that'll put Dunn and Bradstreet themselves up on the stand.

[GILL *comes in center, the raid order still in his hand.*]

GILL. Mr. Welch is here.

MCQUIGG. [*Alert.*] In your office.

GILL. [*Distressed.*] But what about these raids?

MCQUIGG. Hold 'em up.

GILL. But the order says—

MCQUIGG. Orders, fly paper! I'll give the orders tonight.

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GILL. Yes, sir. [*He turns for the door.*]

MCQUIGG. And from now on. [GILL *goes out.*] Now we are ready for Mr. Welch. [*He goes out center.*]

[IRENE *sinks wearily to the couch.*]

AMES. I wonder what they'll say to me at the office?

IRENE. Find out.

[AMES *takes the 'phone from the desk.*]

AMES. [*At the 'phone.*] State eight one hundred. [*To* IRENE.] When I missed young Scarsi's arrest they told me the next time I was late— [*At the 'phone.*] Give me the desk. [*To* IRENE.] And then when I tried to 'phone in about Johnson, they hung up on me. [*At the 'phone—taking a deep breath.*] This is— [*Blurting.*] Ames, at the— . . . I know, Mr. Brown, but I did call and you hung up. . . . What? . . . You're taking me off police? . . . Now, listen! Just because I try to give you big stories instead of your damn news-notes— Well, I won't go back to covering women's clubs . . . I've done that. . . . All you want's the same old stories with different names and addresses, anyway. You can take that City Press of yours and stick it in the lake. I'm through. I quit! [*He slams up the 'phone.*]

IRENE. You're getting that "experience" you wanted, fast.

AMES. All at once.

IRENE. You'll get another job.

AMES. Not here. If they won't listen to me, they can all go to hell. If I'm going to be a reporter, I'll be one!

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I'll go to New York. Here it's like working in a butcher shop.

IRENE. New York?

AMES. Yes.

IRENE. Right away?

AMES. They'll print my stories there.

IRENE. I'd print anything you'd say, to me.

AMES. [*After a moment.*] I wonder if I will be able to get a job in New York?

IRENE. If you can keep your mind on it longer than you can on—this.

AMES. This what?

IRENE. You and me.

AMES. What—?

IRENE. We could talk to each other—couldn't we—if you'd be satisfied with this "experience" for awhile, and not have to make a flying tackle at New York? If you'd just tie to— [*She stops.*]

AMES. The only thing you can tie to is yourself.

IRENE. And the girl-friend?

AMES. Girls? What do I care about gi— Oh. You. Sure, I can talk to you. [*He sits down beside her.*]

IRENE. I'm listening.

AMES. Well, a fellow can't just keep on talking to himself!

IRENE. Don't.

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AMES. I mean, there's none o' this love-making stuff with you.

IRENE. Oh! [*After a moment.*] No?

AMES. No. That's a lot of bunk.

IRENE. What's the idea?

AMES. I'm getting a lot of ideas. [*After a moment.*] Everything you believe in and try to do—you can't! Nobody gives a damn. You learn to hold your head up for a lot of bunk.

IRENE. [*Laughing a little.*] You're so "experienced" now I suppose you wouldn't let yourself fall in love, even if you could.

AMES. What?

IRENE. [*Rising.*] I mean, if I wasn't so intimate with inside dirt, there wouldn't be such a ditch between you and me, would there?

AMES. [*Impatiently.*] There's nothing between you and me!

IRENE. No?

AMES. What's the *matter* with you?

IRENE. "A lot o' bunk." I—like you, you damn fool.

AMES. Well, I like you, too.

IRENE. Yes? [*She shrugs.*] We'll let it go at that. [*She goes out center.*]

[WELCH *comes in right, pale, tight, followed by* MCQUIGG.]

AMES. [*To* MCQUIGG.] Do you want me now?

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MCQUIGG. In a minute, Son.

[AMES *goes out center.*]

WELCH. Where is Scarsi?

MCQUIGG. He'll be here in a second.

WELCH. I'll see him. But, Mac! Don't give this to the papers yet. Let's get together on this. I felt it was Nick—

MCQUIGG. You would, wouldn't you?

WELCH. I knew it was him, the minute I heard how it was done.

MCQUIGG. You've been afraid o' somethin' like this, haven't you?

WELCH. Gall? God! But nobody saw it, did they?

MCQUIGG. You'll find that out, too.

WELCH. [*Unheeding.*] The State's Attorney is out of town. I don't know where to reach him now. So—

MCQUIGG. He wouldn't stand for their fixing this.

WELCH. He's not here, I tell you! So I had the Old Man on the wire. And I'll handle this, myself. If you'll turn Nick over—for questioning—to me—

MCQUIGG. "Use *your* head"—like you told me last night. Can't you see your whole ticket would be [*Sarcastically*] criticized, for carryin' such an eminent murder now?

WELCH. I've been seeing it in my sleep.

MCQUIGG. Then why don't you shake him off?

WELCH. I wish to God he'd— [*He stops.*]

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MCQUIGG. What?

WELCH. [*Relaxing.*] But I'll have to take him out, as soon as the Chief of Police 'phones you the release.

MCQUIGG. Who's gettin' to the Chief?

WELCH. The Old Man.

MCQUIGG. Yeh, the Chief's in a tough spot, too. But the Old Man, himself, can't hush this case. And if you try to spring Scarsi with what I've got on him, your opposition, and their papers, and this respectable public that's been keepin' you awake nights'd come down on you like a ton o' brick. [*He opens the door right. To the* PATROLMAN *there.*] Get Scarsi in. [*To* WELCH.] Release order or not, Welch, you can't afford to turn Nick loose. So I'm keepin' him, and without bookin' or bail, or writs, or any other o' the sleight o' hand performances that Old Man o' yours pulls off. [SCARSI *comes in, followed by the* PATROLMAN.] Tell [*Indicating* SCARSI] him that. [*He waves the* PATROLMAN *out, and goes out center.*]

SCARSI. Where've you been?

WELCH. Talking to the Old Man.

SCARSI. On this?

WELCH. Yes.

SCARSI. Then get me out o' here.

WELCH. You must have gone crazy to pull this.

SCARSI. Who says I pulled it?

WELCH. You were told to stay away from McQuigg.

SCARSI. And I told 'em where to go, didn't I—tellin' *me* to hide.

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WELCH. You—

SCARSI. I didn't keep away from McQuigg, or *any*body, did I?

WELCH. No.

SCARSI. And I showed McQuigg, didn't I?

WELCH. He made you.

SCARSI. *Made* me?

WELCH. This is what he wanted—you in his hands. That's all he came down on your brother for.

SCARSI. Leave my brother out o' this.

WELCH. That's how McQuigg used this girl—to nag you wild.

SCARSI. Well, with the jimmies you old woman're in it's wonder you didn't 'phone McQuigg I was comin' into this District, and to please meet me, and show me picture-books or somethin', till those scared grandmas o' yours could get out and sic me home again!

WELCH. Now, going back to your coming here—

SCARSI. Choke that cross-examination language with me.

WELCH. Did you leave word you were coming here? How did Reilly, Platka, and Cohn get out with that writ?

SCARSI. They do that automatic with me when I'm late reportin' in to that switchboard o' theirs. What the hell're you gettin' so innocent about? But McQuigg'll get contempt o' court—he will get suspended —for that.

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WELCH. For what?

SCARSI. Tearin' up that writ.

WELCH. McQuigg?

SCARSI. Tore it up!

WELCH. Then he saved me the trouble, that's all.

SCARSI. What?

WELCH. Do you think the Old Man would have stood for a writ, if he'd known the jam you're in?

SCARSI. If he wouldn't've—

WELCH. He wouldn't have taken the chance. McQuigg knew what he was doing. Contempt of court? That's a joke! The judge who signed that writ will kiss him for getting rid of the damn thing. Now, about this brother of yours. If he hadn't bragged to this girl—

SCARSI. Lay off him, I tell you! Keep him out o' this.

WELCH. He is out of it, you— [*Controlling himself.*] Didn't I tell you we'd take care of the owner of that car? I talked to downtown from the restaurant. W. K. Taylor left for Hot Springs to-night. Doctor's orders. Joe won't ever be prosecuted for that theft, so—

SCARSI. So what're you goin' to do for *me?*

WELCH. I'll take you out, for questioning.

SCARSI. Hurry it up.

WELCH. We're getting a release order now.

SCARSI. Then you can find "Breeze" Enright and tell him to take this rap. He was drivin' for me tonight.

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[*He reclines lazily upon the couch.*]

WELCH. Is he all the defense you've got?

SCARSI. He can swear self-defense, take a second degree sentence, and go back down. I'll buy him out again.

WELCH. Keep it quiet. [*His voice rising again.*] If you just hadn't let this girl get you with that nonsense she said Joe told her about— [*He stops.*]

SCARSI. What?

WELCH. This Higgins thing!

SCARSI. I've taken care o' that.

WELCH. [*Unheeding.*] But, no, you had to break out and show them who you were.

[MCQUIGG *comes in center.*]

SCARSI. [*To* WELCH.] Snap out of it.

MCQUIGG. A break for justice, Welch. Such an influential citizen might force whoever was with him to take this rap, if that gent' was handy at all. But I just heard from my man who was after Mr. Scarsi's chauffeur, and he's not handy. He's gone, got away, dropped off that freight in the dark. And we're not lookin' for him. So don't let [*Indicating* SCARSI.] him worry the prosecution with that.

SCARSI. If you think that kid you got's goin' to do any identifyin' o' *me*—

WELCH. [*To* MCQUIGG.] Did somebody see this?

MCQUIGG. I told you you'd find that out, too. [*He opens*

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the center door.] Come in. [AMES *and* IRENE *come in. To* AMES.] Now make your identification to Mr. Welch.

SCARSI. [*Rising.*] I been wantin' to hear if this loud-speaker o' yours was positive about that.

AMES. Yes. You—

WELCH. You're a minor, aren't you? Your testimony [*Running down weakly.*] might not—be any good.

AMES. I'm twenty-three. And right now I feel about fifty. So what do you think of that? He shot Johnson!

SCARSI. [*Jerking him around.*] Take a look at me.

AMES. Just as I came in—

SCARSI. Maybe you'll change your mind.

AMES. [*Knocking* SCARSI's *hand away.*] I'm not afraid of you.

SCARSI. With what I got on a couple of fancy doctors downtown, they'll tend to you.

IRENE. Leave him alone, you *hero.*

SCARSI. [*After a moment.*] You're Hayes, uh?

IRENE. Yes. And you're Scarsi, the Awful—afraid of women, but death on kids. I've known enough men to realize that you couldn't be anything but just another one, so vain you have to play only with men because women would laugh, and you can't stand being laughed at, can you?

SCARSI. Nobody laughs at me.

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IRENE. I thought you might be heroic, you're so damn bad. But you were scared stiff when I got in your brother's way.

SCARSI. You won't get in his way again.

IRENE. No, now I'm getting in yours. [SCARSI *laughs.*] I'll play you off the board. Anybody can trick you.

SCARSI. No woman has yet.

IRENE. Then why were you so afraid to see me when Joe wanted you to?

SCARSI. Now cut this stuff! Do you imagine I'd stand for you with Joe after what I made o' him? I educated him, East, didn't I? Yeh. He's a college man. He can go any place—mix with the high-class people—in this town. He's not in the racket, and he won't be, because I'm keepin' him out, d'you hear? And with the jack he'll have he can marry right—on the Drive—*high* class—and not you, you common ——

[IRENE *quickly slaps him across the mouth.*]

SCARSI [*Rigid with fury.*] I'll— [*He starts for her.*]

MCQUIGG. Get back. [*He seizes and spins* SCARSI *back.*]

IRENE. Nobody ought to be afraid of you.

SCARSI. [*Seething.*] No?

IRENE. No. Not when you had to kick this [*Indicating* AMES] baby in the face.

SCARSI. What the hell'd he get in my way for?

IRENE. [*To* MCQUIGG.] There's your confession.

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[SCARSI *stiffens.* WELCH *drops to the chair.*] If he was the one who kicked Ames, he was the one who shot Johnson, wasn't he?

MCQUIGG. [*At* SCARSI.] Ha. Women are still poison to you. [*To* IRENE *and* AMES.] Wait outside. [*To* AMES.] You'll be all right, with her.

SCARSI. [*To* AMES.] I'll see *you* later.

[IRENE *and* AMES *go out center.*]

MCQUIGG. You heard him. Welch. [*To* SCARSI.] How'll you explain that?

SCARSI. How'll you explain anybody strollin' into your station and bangin' an officer—a public servant—a representative o' the people—under a Lieutenant's, and desk Sergeant's, and your nose?

MCQUIGG. What?

SCARSI. The public'll forget this shootin' if it's turned on you.

MCQUIGG. Oh, no it won't.

SCARSI. There's sob-stuff in a young policeman.

MCQUIGG. After he's been killed.

SCARSI. The paper'll demand somebody's head for this.

MCQUIGG. All right. [*He goes to the center door.*] Any head in a storm, Nick. [*Opening the door.*] Boys! Tribune! [*To* SCARSI.] I'm givin' 'em yours, first.

WELCH. [*Desperately.*] Mac—

[MILLER *and* PRATT *push in past the* PATROLMAN.]

PRATT. [*Seeing* SCARSI. *To* MILLER.] I told you.

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MILLER. [*To* SCARSI.] Hi.

PRATT. [*To* MCQUIGG.] Do we shoot now?

MCQUIGG. Fast, and quote me. Mr. Scarsi swaggered in here a half hour ago to scare Johnson and Hayes here into layin' off his brother's case. Johnson started to throw him out, and Scarsi killed him—"a public servant"—without even givin' him a chance to draw. Ames came in and saw him, and when I got him, made the identification, cold. And Miss Hayes just tricked him into admittin' the killin', himself.

MILLER. [*Starting for the door.*] Women and children first.

MCQUIGG. I got Scarsi ten minutes after the shootin'. [MILLER *turns.*] Get that part of it from Sergeant Schmidt, and give him and his squad the credit. And here's Mr. Assistant State's Attorney Welch, already on the job for the people o' the State of Illinois! What the State's goin' to do about it, you can get from him.

WELCH. [*Rising.*] I'll see you after I talk to the accused.

[MILLER *goes out.*]

PRATT. [*Innocently.*] Will you ask hanging for Scarsi, Welch? [*He goes out center.*]

MCQUIGG. No, Nick wouldn't like that, would he, Mr. Welch?

SCARSI. [*To* WELCH.] Get that release order!

WELCH. [*Going to him.*] I told you we're trying to.

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But the Chief has to sign it, doesn't he? And he's lost in some campaign meeting tonight, himself.

MCQUIGG. Yeh, they're all out bellowin' for the Organization, Nick, not thinkin' o' you. As long as your River Wards are set for them for Tuesday what do they care for you? They didn't intend to marry you, and you've got too big to carry. Why, after this election they'll drop you, anyway. Because, o' course, they're goin' to win Tuesday at the polls.

SCARSI. It's not Tuesday yet. And the River Wards can still be set the other way.

WELCH. Now—

SCARSI. Your faction don't win this Primary if I don't give the word.

WELCH. Wait a min—

SCARSI. You're all lice, whichever side o' the pile you're on, so it don't matter to me who I'm with. What d'you suppose I gave fifty grand to *both* factions' campaign funds for? You didn't know I play both ends against the middle, uh? [*He laughs.*] Whoever's in has got to be with me. If I'd put this Reform gang in they'd play pretty, they're so dumb! Now get me out o' here. And quick. [*As* WELCH *hesitates.*] 'Ve you always got to wait for orders?

WELCH. No!

SCARSI. Can't you do anythin' but jump through hoops?

WELCH. Yes.

[*The center door opens,* TURCK *appearing there.*]

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TURCK. [*To* WELCH.] On the 'phone.

WELCH. Who it it?

TURCK. The Old Man.

WELCH. In a minute.

TURCK. This story's out in the football extras down-town.

WELCH. Keep him on the 'phone. [TURCK *goes out. To* SCARSI.] Now with this in the papers you may have to stand arrest till after Tuesday, anyway. [*He starts for the door center.*]

SCARSI. *Me?*

WELCH. Yes.

[GILL *comes in center.*]

GILL. [*To* MCQUIGG.] The Coroner's office called.

MCQUIGG. Who gave them this?

GILL. [*Distressedly.*] Well, you see, before you gave the order not to, I had the Chief's secretary on the wire, so—

MCQUIGG. So it was you, uh! [*He drops to the chair at the desk.*]

GILL. So the Coroner's on the way himself, and—

MCQUIGG. And prob'ly a carload o' those mahogany desks from headquarters, with all the reporters and photographers in town. All racin' each other to the scene o' the publicity.

GILL. [*Hurriedly.*] Well—a squad from the Detective Bureau, too.

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SCARSI. Homicide dicks! [*To* WELCH.] Get on that 'phone. [*To* MCQUIGG.] Do you imagine I'm goin' to take a massage from dicks?

MCQUIGG. These Homicide dicks won't wait to use the hose on you. They'll use their hands. This time it was a policeman who was killed. Oh, maybe you could get him out after election, Welch, if he'd take this rap till then. But after four nights and three days at the Detective Bureau you'd have to carry him on a stretcher. Because [*Rising.*] if anybody takes him away from here it'll be these Homicide dicks, not you.

SCARSI. Are you tryin' to frame me?

MCQUIGG. Yeh. In purple satin, under glass. [*To* GILL.] Know any place you can call on Western Avenue about Seventy-Ninth Street? [*His eyes on* SCARSI.] That's about five minutes from here.

GILL. There's a fillin' station.

MCQUIGG. Get 'em and ask 'em to call you when a Detective Bureau car comes by. They'll know it by that siren they use.

GILL. Yes, sir

[TURCK *comes in center.*]

TURCK. [*To* WELCH.] His Nibs is gettin' restless.

SCARSI. [*To* MCQUIGG.] Where's the washroom?

MCQUIGG. [*To* GILL.] Lieutenant! [*He sardonically bows and gestures* GILL *to the door right.*]

SCARSI. [*To* WELCH.] Speed it up. I got to go to the theatre tonight. [*He goes out with* GILL.]

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[DELANEY *comes in center, a .38 cal. blue steel revolver wrapped in a handkerchief in his hand.*]

DELANEY. Well, Captain, here's [*Exposing the revolver*] his rod.

MCQUIGG. [*To* WELCH.] Nick's.

DELANEY. Exhibit A.

WELCH. Christ! [*He goes out center.*]

MCQUIGG. Take care of it till I come back. [*He goes out center.*

[TURCK *unwraps and chews a fresh piece of gum.*]

DELANEY. [*Exhibiting the gun.*] In the ditch by that crossin' at Eighty-sixth street. I knew he wouldn't lose it before he got stopped. [*He breaks the gun and knocks out the cartridges into his palm.*] One gone.

TURCK. [*Picking up one of the bullets and scratching it.*] Dum-dum bullets. Say, is it true they don't allow them any more in war?

[WELCH *opens the door center.*]

WELCH. Turck.

[TURCK *turns, and at* WELCH'S *nod for him, goes out.*]

[DELANEY *puts the revolver on the desk, takes an envelope from the desk, spills the bullets into it, seals it, pencils a notation on it, and puts it in a drawer of the desk, lightly whistling the tune of a popular song.*]

[GILL *comes in right.*]

GILL. Captain's orders. Wait for the Coroner out back, and keep him there.

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DELANEY. How?

GILL. *I* don't know.

[WELCH *comes in center,* TURCK *after him.*]

DELANEY. [*Going out right.*] I'll get these reporters to interview him. He'll talk for a week. [*He goes out.*]

[GILL *goes out center.*]

TURCK. So that's what the Old Man told you to do.

WELCH. Yes.

TURCK. Shall I get Scarsi in?

WELCH. In a minute. [*After a moment.*] Fix the window. We'll need an alibi, for the press. [TURCK *goes to the window, pushes it up, pulls down the blind, weights it with a telephone directory, then strolls back to* WELCH.] But not unless I give you the word. Got it?

TURCK. Yeh.

WELCH. Get him in.

TURCK. [*Opening the door right.*] Send Scarsi in.

[WELCH *paces.* SCARSI *comes in, his hat on, getting into his overcoat.* TURCK *leans against the door right, chewing lazily.*]

SCARSI. Well? Did you talk to the Old Man?

WELCH. Yes.

SCARSI. Then you got your orders, didn't you?

WELCH. Yes.

SCARSI. All right, then! What're we goin' to do?

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WELCH. Don't say "we"! You've got to take this rap till after Tuesday.

SCARSI. What?

WELCH. I can't take you.

SCARSI. Afraid o' two newspapers and the lily vote?

WELCH. We *can't*—

SCARSI. Are you tryin' to shake me?

WELCH. You know the publicity you get.

SCARSI. Listen, you—

WELCH. We can't carry you and this Primary both.

SCARSI. You take me out or—

WELCH. We're not going to be embarrassed out of votes!

SCARSI. You take me out, or I'll drown you for County Judge in the River Wards. Then where'll you be with the jack you owe? You know you haven't got a dime.

WELCH. This isn't personal with me.

SCARSI. Your wife's such a shopper she even runs through your graft.

[MCQUIGG *comes in center.*]

MCQUIGG. That Bureau car just passed Seventy-ninth and Western, Nick. You'll carry right through your trial the beauty spots this Homicide squad'll leave on you. Why, in the papers your picture'll look like a stockyard's beef.

SCARSI. [*A snarl.*] Yeh?

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MCQUIGG. They'll have to carry you to the scaffold —you'll still be too weak to climb. And you know it takes about twenty minutes to hang by the neck till dead unless the knot o' the rope's just right.

SCARSI. [*To* WELCH.] If anybody touches me I'll drown your whole ticket. You'll lose—

WELCH. We'll lose either way, with you.

SCARSI. *I'll* get the papers in here, and— Yeh, *I'll* give 'em a story! With names, and dates, and figures, that'll raise such a stink there won't be any prominent people left to hand-shake Queens. [*Starting for the door.*] Examiner! Tribune!

[MCQUIGG *seizes him by the neck and flings him back.*]

MCQUIGG. I'll take care o' them. [*He goes out.*]

SCARSI. [*In cornered fury.*] I'll give 'em one o' their exposes of politics and business and crime that'll rip this town wide open! [*He jerks open the door. The* PATROLMAN *there starts for him.*]

PATROLMAN. Keep in there!

[SCARSI *slams the door in his face.*]

WELCH. You won't get the chance.

SCARSI. All right, then. All right! The facts 'll spill easy after I been beat up by dicks. Who that Organization o' yours paid to get its names first on the ballot this time—

WELCH. Who'd believe you?

SCARSI. I got it on paper. Yeh, I got everythin' up my sleeve—ready for a double-cross by you. How you

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made that special investigatin' grand jury o' prominent high-hats fold up last month by condemnin' the elevators in a couple o' million dollar department stores! Yeh! And by remindin' some o' our leadin' citizens o' the extra apartments they keep!

WELCH. Stop!

SCARSI. How the Old Man had that kid in that treasurer's office accidentally killed by a train because his wife made him promise to squeal about the public funds grabbed there!

WELCH. You'll get—

SCARSI. How you framed the Civics Board, to get your own hogs in there, because *that* Board's got seventy-five *million* to spend next year!

WELCH. Keep qui—

SCARSI. I won't stop at blowin' up this town! I'll talk some o' your *State* politicians into court—makin' me pay ten grand a head for pardons and paroles. I'll talk some o' your Republicans in the Federal Building into committin' suicide over the liquor dope I got. Who do you suppose I pay for the breweries I own? Who do you suppose I pay for the alcohol I get? I'll knock your whole Organization cuckoo!

WELCH. Shut up! The Old Man thought you'd try that.

SCARSI. He did, uh?

WELCH. But you won't!

SCARSI. I won't, uh? I'll talk him into flyin' the country

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if I even whisper about what happened to that friend o' yours, Higgins, last week.

WELCH. [*Struck, horribly.*] What?

SCARSI. Who do you suppose ordered him out o' the way, so that my guns had to do the job? [WELCH *stares.*] The Old Man!

WELCH. You're lying! The Old Man wouldn't—

SCARSI. He knew too much for the Old Man!

WELCH. No. *No!* The Old Man wouldn't—

SCARSI. Higgins had been collectin' for him for years. Yeh! He was gettin' too big to carry, too. Christ, *you*'ll be next!

WELCH. [*Waving a limp hand at the window.*] Go on. The window. It's fixed, for a getaway.

SCARSI. I thought you'd crawl when I spoke that piece. [*He springs to the chair against the window, pulls the shade aside, sees that the window is open, then jumps down. To* TURCK.] Here. Give me your rod.

WELCH. [*Coming to, and hurriedly pushing* SCARSI *on the window.*] Hurry up. There's an Elevated two blocks north—that railroad— Hide in a basement, till you can get to your men.

SCARSI. Give me—

[MCQUIGG *comes in center.*]

WELCH. [*Grabbing* SCARSI'S *arm.*] Wait.

SCARSI. [*Jerking away.*] No.

MCQUIGG. What're you up to?

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SCARSI. Tell him.

WELCH. Wait!

SCARSI. Not me. [*He backs to the window, his eyes on* MCQUIGG.] Did you imagine I'd let any lousy politicians who'd knock their own mothers over the head for a vote tell *me* what to do? [*At* WELCH.] I'm off you worms! You haven't got a prayer for Tuesday now. I'm goin' to deliver the River Wards to the Reform gang, for a laugh. And if you think you can steal this Primary, fight it out with the mob, *I'll* have Tuesday at the polls. To lick you, we'll have an election for a change that's square! [*He notices the revolver* DELANEY *left on the desk, snatches it up, holds it on* MCQUIGG, *and puts one foot on the chair to spring to the window.*]

MCQUIGG. [*Hunching.*] Give me that gun.

SCARSI. In the belly if you don't get back. [MCQUIGG *starts for him.* SCARSI *fires. The pin only clicks. He fires frantically again. Realizing that the gun is empty.*] You bastards! [*He flings the gun at* MCQUIGG, *who ducks, and jumps to the window sill.*]

WELCH. Turck!

[TURCK *draws a revolver and fires at* SCARSI, *then again.* SCARSI *pitches to the floor. The patrolmen burst in right.* MCQUIGG, *after a look at* TURCK, *then at* WELCH, *goes to* SCARSI, *bends, examines him, and rises.*]

MCQUIGG. Out.

TURCK. It was the second one that got him. [MCQUIGG *motions the patrolmen out, picks up the gun* SCARSI

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threw, and breaks it, inspecting the chambers.] He didn't know it wasn't loaded! [*He goes out right.*]

[MCQUIGG *tosses the gun to the desk.*]

MCQUIGG. [*Eyeing the body.*] Well—uh—Judge, that issue's out o' the way. [WELCH *hands him* SCARSI'S *overcoat.* MCQUIGG *covers the body with the coat, then sits at the desk.*] The Grand Old Party here'll prob'ly run you for Mayor, for that. [*There is a commotion outside the center door.* MILLER *and* PRATT *push in past the* PATROLMAN *there. To* MILLER *and* PRATT.] Mr. Scarsi tried a getaway. Sergeant Turck o' the State's Attorney office got him.

MILLER. [*Starting out.*] Jes', what a break for the Sunday papers! [*Indicating the body.*] Is he—?

MCQUIGG. He is.

PRATT. [*Innocently.*] Why, Mr. Welch?

MILLER. [*Going out.*] So that gover'ment o' the professionals, by the professionals, and for the professionals, shall not perish from the earth.

PRATT. [*To* WELCH.] What were the events leading up to the tragedy?

WELCH. He— [*He cannot go on.*]

PRATT. That will do. An inquest's hardly legal any more without a little perjury. [*Eyeing the body.*] Well, that blows this election exposé of mine to hell. The long-delayed rising of the upper classes will have to be postponed. [*He goes out.*]

WELCH.] I'm going to—get—some—coffee. [*He goes out right.*]

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MCQUIGG. [*To the* PATROLMAN *outside the center door.*] Send those two in. [AMES *and* IRENE *come in.*] You can go now.

AMES. Thanks.

[*They shake hands.*]

MCQUIGG. Good luck. Keep your feet.

AMES. Sure.

[DELANEY *comes in right.*]

DELANEY. Where you goin', Kid?

AMES. New York. [*Eagerly.*] Were you ever there?

DELANEY. Yeh. A hick town.

AMES. [*Grinning.*] Aw-w-! [*To* IRENE.] Going downtown, Irene? Come on.

IRENE. Not your way, darling. Run along.

AMES. Well— Good-bye, then. [*He goes out.*]

IRENE. [*After a glance at the body.*] Dog eat dog to the last ditch, Policeman, eh?

MCQUIGG. "Old dogs—", Miss Hayes!

IRENE. Yes. You and me both. [*She goes slowly out.*]

MCQUIGG. [*Gazing at the body.*] I thought they might have to do that.

DELANEY. I thought you did, when you sent for Welch. [*After a moment.*] What now, Captain?

MCQUIGG. I'd like some sleep. [DELANEY *goes out.*] But [*Rising and snapping on his cap*] by the time I get through with the Coroner, and the papers, and

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headquarters, and the rest o' the public servants that'll be out here, it'll be time to go to Mass. [*He pushes off the light, and goes out, closing the door.*]

[*The room is still, and dark except for the night blue coming in through the open window and making* SCARSI*'s body faintly visible. Outside, there is again the careening rumble of a passing truck and a raucous shout of "Yah-h-h, McQuigg!"*]

CURTAIN

New York, 1927

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